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SWINBURNE

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**The Belles-Lettres Series**

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SECTION III

**THE ENGLISH DRAMA**

FROM ITS BEGINNING TO THE PRESENT DAY

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GENERAL EDITOR

**GEORGE PIERCE BAKER**

**PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH IN  
HARVARD UNIVERSITY**







## MARY STUART

IN CAPTIVITY AT SHEFFIELD CASTLE  
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# MARY STUART

BY

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

EDITED BY

WILLIAM MORTON PAYNE, LL.D.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR OF "THE DIAL"

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To  
G. M.



## Prefatory Note

THE selection for the purposes of the *Belles-Lettres Series* of the play most strictly representative of Swinburne's dramatic work has been determined by the following considerations. *The Queen Mother* and *Rosamond* are out of the question because of their immaturity; *Atalanta in Calydon* and *Erechtheus* are put aside because of the fact that their proper classification is with the lyrical rather than with the dramatic group of his poems. There remain the *Mary Stuart* trilogy and the four later dramas. Since the trilogy is unquestionably Swinburne's dramatic masterpiece, it must be represented, and (*Bothwell* being excluded by its great length) the choice must fall upon either *Chastelard* or *Mary Stuart*. The former of these plays is essentially a production of the poet's unchastened and exuberant youth, and consequently, despite the patent beauty of its poetic diction, must give place to the latter, which exemplifies the full ripeness of Swinburne's dramatic powers and the complete mastery of his poetical material. The fact, moreover, that the author has himself avowed the belief that he has never "written anything worthier" in its kind than *Mary Stuart* should confirm the justice of the selection. A further reason is incidentally provided by the fact that Schiller's treatment of the close of the career of the Queen of Scots is made the subject of much

study in school and college, a fact which makes it interesting to compare his treatment with that of Swinburne.

The present text follows the so-called second edition of 1899, which is, however, an unaltered reprint of the original edition of 1881.

W. M. P.

## Biography

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE was born in London, April 5, 1837. He was the oldest child of Admiral Charles Henry Swinburne and Lady Jane Henrietta, daughter of the third Earl of Ashburnham. Both the Swinburne and the Ashburnham lineages are long and distinguished. The present head of the family is Sir John Edward Swinburne, sixth baronet, a first cousin of the poet. Algernon was educated at Eton and Balliol, but left Oxford without taking a degree. During his university years (1856-1860) he contributed to *Undergraduate Papers*, distinguished himself in French, Italian, and the classics, and began his life-long friendship with Morris, Rossetti, and Burne-Jones. His first book, *The Queen Mother and Rosamond*, was published in 1860, just after leaving the university. A visit to Italy the next year was made memorable by his meeting with Walter Savage Landor. Returning to England, he devoted himself to literary work, in 1865 won the applause of the judicious with his *Atalanta in Calydon* and *Chastelard*, and in 1866 took the public by storm with the famous first volume of *Poems and Ballads*. During the next twelve years he lived in London, and wrote industriously. The chief works of this period are *William Blake: A Critical Essay* (1868), *Songs before Sunrise* (1871), *Bothwell* (1874), *Essays and Studies* (1875), *Songs of Two Nations* (1875), *Erechtheus* (1876), and the second series of *Poems and Ballads* (1878). During these years in London he became intimately associated with Theodore Watts (now Watts-Dunton), and in 1879 accepted the invitation of that distinguished man of letters to share his home at Putney Hill, a London suburb. Here the poet has lived ever since, except for a few holiday excursions, and here he has produced the long succession of books that have added almost yearly to his ever-broadening fame. The principal titles are: *A Study of Shakespeare* (1880), *Songs of the Spring-tides* (1880), *Studies in Song* (1880), *Mary Stuart* (1881), *Tristram of Lyonesse* (1882), *A Century of Roundels* (1883), *A Midsummer Holiday* (1884), *Marino Faliero* (1885), *A Study of Victor*

*Hugo* (1886), *Miscellanies* (1886), *Lochrine* (1887), a third series of *Poems and Ballads* (1889), *The Sisters* (1892), *Astrophel* (1894), *Studies in Prose and Poetry* (1894), *The Tale of Balen* (1896), *Rosamund, Queen of the Lombards* (1899), *A Channel Passage* (1904), and *Love's Cross Currents* (1905), a novel in epistolary form, published serially and pseudonymously in 1877, and written in the early sixties. The foregoing list omits several works of minor importance, and takes no account of a large amount of material still uncollected from the pages of the periodicals to which it was contributed. The poet has recently superintended a uniform reissue of his verse, the *Poems*, in six volumes, and the *Tragedies*, in five volumes. Of late years Swinburne has lived a somewhat secluded life, owing in large measure to the infirmity of deafness, but he retains his active interest in the historical happenings of the time.



# Introduction

SWINBURNE is the author of eleven dramatic works, all tragedies, and all written in verse.<sup>1</sup> The list comprises: first, the two juvenile pieces, *The Queen Mother* and *Rosamond*, included in his earliest volume; second, *Atalanta in Calydon* and *Erechtheus*, his two reproductions of the Greek form; third, the colossal chronicle-trilogy which deals with the tragic fortunes of the Queen of Scots, and which consists of *Chastelard*, *Bothwell*, and *Mary Stuart*; and fourth, the tragedies of his later years, which are *Marino Faliero*, *Lochrine*, *The Sisters*, and *Rosamund, Queen of the Lombards*. Of these eleven productions the two Greek studies, being essentially lyrical in spirit and accent, are grouped with the *Poems* in their author's classification of his works, while the remaining nine constitute the *Tragedies* in that classification, and occupy five of the eleven volumes which make up the new uniform edition of Swinburne's verse. It is an account of these nine tragedies that is now attempted.

In the *Dedicatory Epistle* of 1904, inscribing the new edition of his works to Theodore Watts-Dunton,

<sup>1</sup> Since this essay is given up exclusively to the study of Swinburne's dramatic verse, its readers may be referred, for a more comprehensive view of his work, and for those considerations which compel us to regard him as the greatest poet now living, to the present editor's *Introduction to Selected Poems by Algernon Charles Swinburne*, published in the section of the *Belles-Lettres Series* devoted to *Nineteenth Century Poets*.

his "best and dearest friend," Swinburne thus speaks of his first venture in dramatic composition: "My first if not my strongest ambition was to do something worth doing, and not utterly unworthy of a young countryman of Marlowe the teacher and Webster the pupil of Shakespeare, in a line of work which those three poets had left as a possibly unattainable example for ambitious Englishmen. And my first book, written while yet under academic or tutorial authority, bore evidence of that ambition in every line. I should be the last to deny that it also bore evidence of the fact that its writer had no more notion of dramatic or theatrical construction than the authors of *Tamburlaine the Great*, *King Henry VI*, and *Sir Thomas Wyatt*." This self-criticism seems a trifle severe as applied to *The Queen Mother*, which play, whatever its faults of mannerism, of obscurity or super-subtlety, of turgid diction, and of over-emphasis of its sensuous elements, is at least structurally coherent and dramatically effective in the Elizabethan manner. It preserves the unities of time and place, the scene being laid in Paris during the three days that culminated with the night of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and many an Elizabethan play has less unity of action. *Rosamond*, which is also included in this first volume, is a much slighter affair. It is a dramatic sketch in five scenes, alternating between the king's palace at Shene and the bower at Woodstock, and dealing with the secret love of Henry II and the vengeance taken by his jealous queen. An interesting comparison might be made between this work and Tennyson's *Becket*, in which the same theme receives episodic treatment.

Swinburne's chief dramatic work is the great trilogy which occupied his attention for a score of years, and which has for its central figure the ill-starred Queen of Scots. Here was a subject magnificently fitted for tragic uses, and appealing with peculiar force to a poet whose own ancestors had fought and bled in the Stuart cause. And so the woman whose figure had been the "red star of boyhood's fiery thought" occupied the best years of the poet's manhood with an endeavor to set forth her varied fortunes in a drama of colossal plan, and to embody in the characterization something of the "love and wonder" with which her memory had inspired the "April age" of his youth. *Chastelard*, the first section of the trilogy, was published in 1865, but its writing dates, at least in part, from an earlier period. In his *Adieux à Marie Stuart*, written after the completion of the trilogy in 1881, Swinburne speaks of "the song . . . that took your praise up twenty years ago," and in the *Dedicatory Epistle* already mentioned he calls *Chastelard* a play "conceived and partly written by a youngster not yet emancipated from servitude to college rule." He further says, after disclaiming any ascription to his earlier volume of "power to grapple with the realities and subtleties of character and of motive," that in *Chastelard* "there are two figures and a sketch in which I certainly seem to see something of real and evident life."

The figures here referred to are, it is hardly necessary to state, those of the Queen and of the poet-lover who has come with her from France to Scotland,

while the sketch is that of Darnley. In the play, the Queen weds Darnley as an immediate consequence of her imagined discovery of Chastelard's unfaithfulness, whereas the historical fact is that the marriage did not take place until more than two years after the execution of Chastelard. The four women who are the personal attendants of Mary Stuart, and who are known in Scotch romance and minstrelsy as "the Queen's Maries," figure prominently in *Chastelard*, and the motive of the tragedy is provided by the Queen's belief that her lover has played her false with one of them. In a sense, the motive of the entire trilogy is thus provided, for this woman, Mary Beaton, loves Chastelard, although her affection is unrequited. And when, twenty-five years after his death, her mistress expiates upon the scaffold at Fotheringay the accumulated errors and crimes of a lifetime, the direct agency in bringing about the tragic consummation is this same Mary Beaton, who has for all these years in silent persistency guarded her secret and cherished her vengeful purpose. Chastelard meets his fate as a "verray parfit gentil knight," breathing no word of reproach upon the Queen's fame, and taking upon himself the entire burden of their common guilt. The closing scenes are dark with foreshadowings of what is to come in after years. Says the Queen, alone with her doomed lover for the last time :

" I am quite sure  
I shall die sadly some day, Chastelard,  
I am quite certain." Act v, Scene 2.

And Chastelard :

“ Men must love you in life’s spite ;  
For you will always kill them, man by man  
Your lips will bite them dead ; yea, though you would,  
You shall not spare them ; all will die of you.”

Act v, Scene 2.

And Mary Beaton, pleading for Chastelard’s life :

“ If you do slay him you are but shamed to death :  
All men will cry upon you, women weep,  
Turning your sweet name bitter with their tears ;  
Red shame grow up out of your memory  
And burn his face that would speak well of you ;  
You shall have no good word nor pity, none,  
Till some such end be fallen upon you.”

Act iv, Scene 1.

And the prayer of Mary Beaton, when the headsman has done his work, and the cry, “ So perish the Queen’s traitors ! ” goes up from the multitude, is this :

“ Yea, but so  
Perish the Queen ! God do thus much to her  
For his sake only : yea, for pity’s sake  
Do this much with her.”

Act v, Scene 3.

Thus the tragedy closes, heavy with the sense that somewhere in the dim future it will be complemented by another and more resounding tragedy, and the ends of a retributive justice be accomplished. It is evident that the entire trilogy was outlined in some shape in the poet’s consciousness before the completion of this introductory section.

*Botbwell*, the second section of the trilogy, did not appear until 1874, which means that nearly ten of Swinburne’s most virile years went to its composition.

It covers a period of a little more than two years, from March 9, 1566, to May 16, 1568, — that is, from the assassination of Rizzio to the escape of the Queen into England after the battle of Langside. The five acts are respectively entitled *David Rizzio*, *Bothwell*, *Jane Gordon*, *John Knox*, and *The Queen*. The first act deals with the conspiracy for the removal of the Queen's Italian favorite, and ends with his being dragged from her helpless presence to death at the hands of Darnley and his fellow assassins. In the second act, Bothwell, whose advent into the Queen's life had been ominously heralded at the very close of *Chastelard*, and whose ambitious passion for Mary was already kindled, although he had but recently been wedded to Jane Gordon, becomes the central figure. Nearly a year is covered by this act, and the events are the Queen's escape, with Bothwell's aid, from her self-constituted guardians, the flight and outlawry of Rizzio's slayers, the birth of the child who was afterwards to become James I of England, the investment of Bothwell with titles and estates, and the plot against Darnley, now hated by all parties alike for his treachery and double-dealing. The act ends with his ignominious death at his lonely lodgings in Kirk of Field. In the third act, Bothwell, who is denounced on every hand as the murderer of Darnley, is protected from popular vengeance by the Queen, who becomes more shameless than ever in her intercourse with him. Then follows his farcical trial and acquittal for lack of evidence, his further advancement in power and wealth, his divorce from Lady Jane Gordon, whom he had

wedded only the year before, his marriage with the Queen, his flight with her to the refuge of Borthwick Castle, the siege and capture of the castle by the confederated lords, and Bothwell's escape, followed by that of the Queen in the disguise of a page. The fourth act opens with the array of the opposing forces at Carberry Hill, followed by proposals and counter-proposals to settle the engagement by single combat, and the final agreement that Bothwell shall retire unmolested while the Queen remains a prisoner. Here, after a passionate scene of parting, Bothwell disappears from the Queen's sight forever, fleeing into exile, and imprisonment, and ignominy. The following scenes show us the Queen at Edinburgh in the hands of her captors, and John Knox in the High Street denouncing her in what is probably the longest uninterrupted speech to be found anywhere in dramatic literature, a speech of something like four hundred verses. At the close of this act the Queen is about to be conveyed to the island castle of Lochleven, which has been chosen as the safest available place for her bestowal. In the fifth act, we have the forced abdication of the Queen in favor of her infant son, and her consent to the regency of Murray, her half-brother. Then follows her escape from her island-prison, the rallying of her scattered friends to her defence, her final stand and disastrous defeat at Langside, her flight to the border, and her last view, standing on the shores of Solway Firth, of her native land. The closing words of the drama are those with which she goes into her life-long exile, and give expression, robed in the utmost magnificence of

poetic diction, to the passionate resolution with which she confronts the future, and looks to it for the requital of all the wrong that has been done her, and all the shame that has been wrought upon her during her seven years' sojourn in Scotland.

“Methinks the sand yet cleaving to my foot  
Should not with no more words be shaken off,  
Nor this my country from my parting eyes  
Pass unsaluted ; for who knows what year  
May see us greet hereafter? Yet take heed,  
Ye that have ears, and hear me ; and take note,  
Ye that have eyes, and see with what last looks  
Mine own take leave of Scotland ; seven years since  
Did I take leave of my fair land of France,  
My joyous mother, mother of my joy,  
Weeping ; and now with many a woe between  
And space of seven years' darkness, I depart  
From this distempered and unnatural earth  
That casts me out unmothered, and go forth  
On this gray sterile bitter gleaming sea  
With neither tears nor laughter, but a heart  
That from the softest temper of its blood  
Is turned to fire and iron. If I live,  
If God pluck not all hope out of my hand,  
If aught of all mine prosper, I that go  
Shall come back to men's ruin, as a flame  
The wind bears down, that grows against the wind,  
And grasps it with great hands, and wins its way,  
And wins its will, and triumphs ; so shall I  
Let loose the fire of all my heart to feed  
On these that would have quenched it. I will make  
From sea to sea one furnace of the land,  
Whereon the wind of war shall beat its wings  
Till they wax faint with hopeless hope of rest,  
And with one rain of men's rebellious blood  
Extinguish the red embers. I will leave  
No living soul of their blaspheming faith



Who war with monarchs : God shall see me reign  
As he shall reign beside me, and his foes  
Lie at my foot with mine ; kingdoms and kings  
Shall from my heart take spirit, and at my soul  
Their souls be kindled to devour for prey  
The people that would make its prey of them,  
And leave God's altar stripped of sacrament  
As all kings' heads of sovereignty, and make  
Bare as their thrones his temples ; I will set  
Those old things of his holiness on high  
That are brought low, and break beneath my feet  
These new things of men's fashion ; I will sit  
And see tears flow from eyes that saw me weep,  
And dust and ashes and the shadow of death  
Cast from the block beneath the axe that falls  
On heads that saw me humbled ; I will do it,  
Or bow mine own down to no royal end,  
And give my blood for theirs if God's will be,  
But come back never as I now go forth  
With but the hate of men to track my way,  
And not the face of any friend alive."

Thus ends a work which has the distinction of being not only the longest of Swinburne's dramas, but also the longest production of its class in the whole of English literature. The five acts are divided into sixty scenes, and comprise nearly fifteen thousand lines of blank verse. The *dramatis personae* number in the neighborhood of sixty, each one of whom is a character occupying a definite niche, if not a pedestal, in the history of that troublous time. The author's own comment upon *Bothwell* is as follows : "That ambitious, conscientious, and comprehensive piece of work is of course less properly definable as a tragedy than by the old Shakespearean term of a chronicle-history. . . . This

play of mine was not, I think, inaccurately defined as an epic drama in the French verses of dedication which were acknowledged by the greatest of all French poets in a letter from which I dare only quote one line of Olympian judgment and godlike generosity. 'Occuper ces deux cimes, cela n'est donné qu'à vous.' Nor will I refrain from the confession that I cannot think it an epic or a play in which any one part is sacrificed to any other, any subordinate figure mishandled or neglected or distorted or effaced for the sake of the predominant and central person. And though this has nothing or less than nothing to do with any question of poetic merit or demerit, of dramatic success or unsuccess, I will add that I took as much care and pains as though I had been writing or compiling a history of the period to do loyal justice to all the historic figures which came within the scope of my dramatic or poetic design. There is not one which I have designedly altered or intentionally modified: it is of course for others to decide whether there is one which is not the living likeness of an actual or imaginable man."

Before leaving *Bothwell* for a discussion of *Mary Stuart*, two contemporary judgments may be quoted, both framed within a year of its publication. E. C. Stedman said of it: "I agree with them who declare that Swinburne, by this massive and heroic composition, has placed himself in the front line of our poets, that no one can be thought his superior in true dramatic power. The work not only is large, but written in a large manner. It seems deficient in contrasts, especially needing the relief which humor, song, and

by-play afford to a tragic plot. But it is a great historical poem, cast in a dramatic rather than epic form, for the sake of stronger analysis and dialogue. Considered as a dramatic epic, it has no parallel, and is replete with proofs of laborious study and faithful use of the rich materials afforded by the theme. . . . *Bothwell* exhibits no excess but that of length, and no mannerism; on the contrary, a superb manner, and a ripe, pure, and majestic style.”<sup>1</sup> J. A. Symonds wrote of it in these terms: “It is surely a wonderful work of art. I do not think anything greater has been produced in our age, in spite of its inordinate length and strange affectation of style. However, one reads one’s self into a sympathy with his use of language, and then the sustained effort of thought and imagination is overpowering in its splendour. It seems to me the most virile exercise of the poetic power in combination with historic accuracy that our literature of this century can show.”<sup>2</sup>

The completion of the dramatic trilogy is given us in *Mary Stuart*, which appeared in 1881. This drama is hardly more than one third the length of *Bothwell*, and requires only about half as many characters for its unfolding. When it opens, over eighteen years have elapsed since the Queen crossed Solway Firth, and she is now within a few months of her doom. Exactly stated, the period of the play is from August 4, 1586, to February 8, 1587. It opens with the Babington con-

<sup>1</sup> *Victorian Poets*, revised edition (1887), p. 406.

<sup>2</sup> *John Addington Symonds: A Biography*. H. F. Brown, p. 301.

spiracy — the last of the many plots against Elizabeth and the commonwealth to which the captive Queen set her hand — and deals in swift succession with the capture and punishment of the conspirators, the trial of Mary for complicity in their design, her conviction of blood-guiltiness, the hesitation of Elizabeth to give effect to the judgment thereupon pronounced, the eventual signing of the death-warrant, and the execution at Fotheringay Castle. The immediate motive of this tragic consummation is provided, as has already been stated, through the agency of Mary Beaton — that one of the Queen's Maries who had been her constant companion during all her years of triumph and defeat, in Scotland and in England. Mary Beaton has never forgotten that she loved Chastelard, and has never forgiven the Queen for allowing him to go to his execution without an effort to save him. As the years pass by, the sharpness of her desire to avenge his death becomes dulled, or rather that desire becomes transformed into a sort of prophetic sense — voiced over and over again in the tragic crises of the history — that she shall never leave the side of her mistress until the consequences of that deed shall somehow recoil upon the doer, and cause the Queen to expiate with her own life the bloodshed of her old-time lover. This attitude of passive expectation is maintained by Mary Beaton until near the end, when judgment has been pronounced upon the Queen, and her life is hanging in the balance. Then the old vengeful instinct stirs once more, and the maid tips the scale against her mistress. The means of vengeance are in her possession, for she has preserved for years a letter written in bitter mood by

Mary Stuart to Elizabeth and given to the maid to destroy — a letter recounting in the guise of friendly warning certain unspeakable allegations against Elizabeth's character gathered from the Countess of Shrewsbury. This letter (well known to historians as one of the documents in the case) is now despatched to Elizabeth, who is inflamed to fury upon reading it, and at once signs the death-warrant.

This invention, so richly justified by the artistic unity which it bestows upon the trilogy taken as a whole, is one of the very few departures that Swinburne has made from exact historical truth in dealing with the history of the Queen of Scots. He has not been guilty, he says, of "any conscious violation of historical chronology, except — to the best of my recollection — in two instances: the date of Mary's second marriage, and the circumstances of her last interview with John Knox. I held it as allowable to anticipate by two years the event of Darnley's nuptials, or in other words to postpone for two years the event of Chastelard's execution, as to compile or condense into one dramatic scene the details of more than one conversation recorded by Knox between Mary and himself." One has only to read Swinburne's memoir of Mary Stuart in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* to realize with what scrupulous care he has dramatized the facts of her career. The very fact that he should have been chosen as the man best fitted to prepare that memoir affords convincing evidence of the thoroughness of the historical scholarship which he brought to the writing of his greatest dramatic work.

The character of Mary Stuart has been, and will con-

tinue to be, one of the insoluble problems of history. The almost endless controversies of which it has been the subject are a natural consequence of the strong religious, political, and personal partisanship to which she and her cause excited the men of her own time. And these controversies still range men into opposing parties through the persistence of the passions which they involve. The documentary evidence, moreover, upon which determination of the points at issue must be founded, is hopelessly entangled in a mesh of forgery and fabrication and falsehood. Again, many matters of importance rest upon circumstantial evidence alone, for the dark statecraft of those days pursued devious ways, and was careful to conceal its tracks, as far as it was humanly possible so to do. In such a case the insight of the poet may well prove a safer reliance than the industry of the historian ; at all events, the Mary Stuart that Swinburne has constructed for us is given the consistency of a product of the creative imagination, and this without doing any serious violence to the historical record. As an elaborate piece of portraiture it is artistically convincing, and at the same time it is based in every feature upon what is at least a reasonable interpretation of the disputed conditions.

Swinburne's conception of his heroine may best be illustrated by a few quotations from the trilogy. It is John Knox who thus describes her :

“ Her soul  
Is as a flame of fire, insatiable,  
And subtle as thin water ; with her craft  
Is passion mingled so inseparably

That each gets strength from other, her swift wit  
 By passion being enkindled and made hot,  
 And by her wit her keen and passionate heart  
 So tempered that it burn itself not out,  
 Consuming to no end." *Bothwell*, Act 1, Scene 2.

The Queen herself, in a scene with Bothwell, is moved by an approaching storm to this revealing utterance :

" I never loved the windless weather, nor  
 The dead face of the water in the sun ;  
 I had rather the live wave leapt under me,  
 And fits of foam struck light on the dark air,  
 And the sea's kiss were keen upon my lip  
 And bold as love's and bitter ; then my soul  
 Is a wave too that springs against the light  
 And beats and bursts with one great strain of joy  
 As the sea breaking. You said well, this light  
 Is like shed blood spilt here by drops and there  
 That overflows the red brims of the cloud  
 And stains the moving water : yet the waves  
 Pass, and the split light of the broken sun  
 Rests not upon them but a minute's space ;  
 No longer should a deed, methinks, once done  
 Endure upon the life of memory  
 To stain the days thereafter with remorse  
 And mar the better seasons."

*Bothwell*, Act 11, Scene 6.

In the following words, placed upon the lips of Sir Drew Drury, one of the nobler of her enemies, we may clearly read Swinburne's own estimate of Mary Stuart's character :

" Nay, myself  
 Were fain to see this coil wound up, and her  
 Removed that makes it : yet such things will pluck  
 Hard at men's hearts that think on them, and move

Compassion that such long strange years should find  
 So strange an end : nor shall men ever say  
 But she was born right royal ; full of sins,  
 It may be, and by circumstance or choice  
 Dyed and defaced with bloody stains and black,  
 Unmerciful, unfaithful, but of heart  
 So fiery high, so swift of spirit and clear,  
 In extreme danger and pain so lifted up,  
 So of all violent things inviolable,  
 So large of courage, so superb of soul,  
 So sheathed with iron mind invincible  
 And arms unbreached of fire-proof constancy —  
 By shame not shaken, fear or force or death,  
 Change, or all confluence of calamities —  
 And so at her worst need beloved, and still  
 Naked of help and honour when she seemed,  
 As other women would be, and of hope  
 Stripped, still so of herself adorable  
 By minds not always all ignobly mad  
 Nor all made poisonous with false grain of faith,  
 She shall be a world's wonder to all time,  
 A deadly glory watched of marvelling men  
 Not without praise, not without noble tears,  
 And if without what she would never have  
 Who had it never, pity — yet from none  
 Quite without reverence and some kind of love  
 For that which was so royal.''

*Mary Stuart, Act iv, Scene 2.*

This conception of Mary's character is reinforced by many passages in Swinburne's *Britannica* memoir, and in his *Note on the Character of Mary Queen of Scots*, both printed in the volume of prose *Miscellanies*. Himself a partisan of the Queen in respect of those traits which are admirable in themselves wherever found, her defender as far as consistency with the belief that her crimes were great and her doom righteous permits, he



has only scorn for those who defend her at the expense of her intelligence and courage. "To vindicate her from the imputations of her vindicators" is his purpose, implicit in the trilogy, clearly expressed in the vigorous prose which serves the poem by way of appendix. Whatever opinion a rational mind may form concerning the Queen of Scots, it cannot possibly be such an opinion as her more zealous champions entertain, as embodied in the theorem "that a woman whose intelligence was below the average level of imbecility, and whose courage was below the average level of a coward's, should have succeeded throughout the whole course of a singularly restless and adventurous career in imposing herself upon the judgment of every man and every woman with whom she ever came into any sort or kind of contact, as a person of the most brilliant abilities and the most dauntless daring." And yet to some such position as this those are driven who contend that she had no complicity in the murder of Darnley, that she was forced into the marriage with Bothwell by "an unscrupulous oligarchy," and that she was innocent of the plots to strike at the life of Elizabeth. Swinburne's final word upon the whole subject may be found in the following passages: "For her own freedom of will and of way, of passion and of action, she cared much; for her creed she cared something, for her country she cared less than nothing." "Considered from any possible point of view, the tragic story of her life in Scotland admits but of one interpretation which is not incompatible with the impression she left on all friends and all foes alike. And this interpretation is simply that she hated Darnley

with a passionate but justifiable hatred, and loved Bothwell with a passionate but pardonable love. For the rest of her career I cannot but think that whatever was evil and ignoble in it was the work of education or of circumstance ; whatever was good and noble, the gift of nature or of God."

It is not likely that Swinburne's full-length portraiture of the Queen of Scots, as exhibited in the trilogy taken as a whole, will ever be rivalled. He has done the work once for all, with such subtlety of delineation, firmness of grasp, and breadth of historical outlook, as to discourage any future attempt to deal with the same subject in an imaginative way. Past attempts of this sort have been numerous, but the best of them by comparison are fragmentary and inadequate. Scott, in *The Abbot*, dealt only with the episode of Lochleven Castle and its immediate consequences ; Alfieri, in *Maria Stuarda*, with the murder of Darnley alone, seeking to clear the Queen of complicity in that crime ; Schiller, in *Maria Stuart*, with the closing days of her life in Fotheringay Castle ; and Björnson, in *Maria Stuart i Skotland*, with the period from the assassination of Rizzio to the marriage with Bothwell. These are the most important of the earlier works that have chosen Mary Stuart for imaginative treatment, but great as are the names attached to them, they sink into insignificance when compared with the colossal production which is the crowning work of Swinburne's life.

After the completion of *Mary Stuart*, Swinburne turned his attention to a subject already distinguished in English poetry by Byron's treatment, and pro-

duced (1885) the five-act tragedy of *Marino Faliero*, his most important dramatic work, aside from the trilogy above described. In choosing this subject he was perhaps to some extent actuated by the impulse which impelled Turner to bestow upon the National Gallery at London two of his finest works, upon the condition that they should be hung with two of the masterpieces of Claude Lorraine, that all the world might note how the English artist excelled the French in his own special domain. Swinburne's work as easily excels that of Byron in all points except possibly that of fitness for stage presentation, and not much may be claimed for either play upon that score. Byron was at his weakest in blank verse and in the construction of tragedy, while in these directions Swinburne puts forth his greatest strength. Since the subject of this tragedy has the additional advantage of engaging the republican sympathy and impassioned ardor in the worship of freedom which color and season all of Swinburne's work, it is not strange that his *Marino Faliero* should be an entirely noble and inspiring creation.

The historical facts have been closely followed. The insult to the young and fair wife of the Doge, the trivial sentence passed upon the offender, the ungovernable passion of Faliero when he learns of this, the proffered and accepted leadership in the popular conspiracy and the arrest of those implicated, and the final judgment pronounced upon the noble traitor, successively claim the reader's attention. That which is characteristic of Swinburne's presentation, and which, in fact, affords the keynote of his conception, is the

attitude of Faliero when reason resumes its sway over his mind, and when calm reflection justifies with him the course which passion has initiated. The opportunity for revenge being offered him at the very hour when he has learned how lightly the patrician tribunal holds the insult done him, he eagerly grasps it, regardless of the future ; but afterwards, when the personal motives which prompt him have lost their force with the subsidence of his anger, he is held to his course by a vivid realization of the sufferings of the Venetian people at the hands of a corrupt and unscrupulous oligarchy. The mere traitor that an hour's passion has made of him becomes merged in the liberator of the republic from its oppressors. To effect this transition in such a way as to attach the sympathy of the reader to Faliero's fortunes at the last was the most difficult and delicate part of the poet's task. Without discussing the historical justice of this conception, it must be admitted that its artistic success is brilliant. In the scene which precedes the failure of the conspiracy, as well as in the judgment scene and that which follows it, the person of Faliero becomes transfigured, and the divine halo of the deliverer invests him with its radiance.

The closing scenes rise to a poetic height that even Swinburne does not often reach. These are the words of Faliero to his nephew, keeping watch with him through the night that precedes the projected uprising :

“ And this do thou  
Know likewise, and hold fast, that if to-day  
Dawn rise not, but the darkness drift us down,  
And leave our hopes as wrecks and waifs despised

Of men that walk by daylight, not with us  
 Shall faith decline from earth or justice end,  
 Or freedom, which if dead should bid them die,  
 Rot, though the works and very names of us,  
 And all the fruit we looked for, nipped of winds  
 And gnawn of worms, and all the stem that bore,  
 And all the root, wax rotten. Here shall be  
 Freedom, or never in this time-weary world  
 Justice, nor ever shall the sunrise know  
 A sight to match the morning, nor the sea  
 Hear from the sound of living souls on earth,  
 Free as her foam, and righteous as her tides,  
 Just, equal, aweless, perfect, even as she,  
 A word to match her music." Act IV, Scene 1.

This prophecy of the resurrection of Italy becomes even more explicit in the later scene in which Faliero, with the vision that comes to men in their dying hour, foretells the advent of Mazzini, of

"The man  
 Supreme of spirit, and perfect, and unlike  
 Me : for the tongue that bids dark death arise,  
 The hand that takes dead freedom by the hand  
 And lifts up living, others these must be  
 Than mine, and others than the world, I think,  
 Shall bear till men wax worthier." Act V, Scene 2.

Faliero's last words are these :

"Be not faint of heart :  
 I go not as a base man goes to death,  
 But great of hope : God cannot will that here  
 Some day shall spring not freedom : nor perchance  
 May we, long dead, not know it, who died of love  
 For dreams that were and truths that were not. Come.  
 Bring me but toward the landing whence my soul  
 Sets sail, and bid God speed her forth to sea." Act V, Scene 2.

Thus ends a masterpiece of dramatic blank verse such as no other English poet of the nineteenth century — save only Shelley in *The Cenci* — has surpassed or even equalled. Compared with the chronicle-history of the Queen of Scots, it even has a certain advantage as poetry, because its action is not impeded by the necessity of faithfulness to the *minutiae* of the historical situation.

Nor does any such impediment exist in the case of *Lochrine* (1887), the dramatic successor of *Marino Faliero*. There is no tangibility whatever to the legendary material upon which this drama is based, unless we allow something of that quality to have been bestowed upon it by *Comus*, or by the anonymous Elizabethan play once absurdly attributed to Shakespeare :

“ Dead fancy’s ghost, not living fancy’s wraith,  
Is now the storied sorrow that survives  
Faith in the record of these lifeless lives.”

*Dedication, viii.*

The story is that of Lochrine, the mythical King of Britain, and his secret love for Estrild, his “ Scythian concubine.” It is the dramatic situation of *Rosamond* over again, with the difference that the jealous queen, instead of privately doing away with her rival, gathers an army and makes war upon her unfaithful spouse. In the end, Lochrine is slain, Estrild stabs herself, and their daughter Sabrina plunges into the Severn. The character of this maiden dear to many English poets, this

“ Virgin, daughter of Lochrine,  
Sprung from old Anchises’ line,”

is delineated with loving tenderness, and hers is the figure that lingers longest in the memory. *Lochrine*

occupies a unique place among Swinburne's tragedies on account of its form. It is written, not in blank verse, but in a variety of rhymed pentameters. One scene is a succession of twelve sonnets, broken only by a passage of interwoven rhymes; other scenes are in heroic couplets, and still others in *ottava* and *terza rima*. It is a task of curious interest to trace these various rhyming combinations through the drama, and perhaps no other work of Swinburne is as remarkable for its technical wizardry.

Five years elapsed before Swinburne produced another play, and when *The Sisters* (1892) appeared, it proved surprisingly unlike any of its predecessors. It is a domestic drama of the early nineteenth century, enacted in an English country-house. The hero is a youthful soldier just returned from Waterloo. The two sisters are in love with him, and when he has declared himself for one of them, the other poisons both him and her successful rival. There is a play within the play, for the entire fourth act is given up to an Italian dramatic interlude performed by the leading characters in the larger work. This miniature tragedy, which supplies the suggestion for the tragedy that is realized in the closing act of *The Sisters*, is written in the author's characteristic vein of heightened poetic diction; the rest of the work which includes it is written in a simple and colloquial style which precludes the display of poetic power. *The Sisters* is more successful as a play than as a poem, for it exhibits the essentially dramatic instinct that grasps to the full the dramatic possibilities of each moment of the action, and that determines the

succession of events with clear sight of the coming climax. The author himself speaks of it as "the only modern English play I know in which realism in the reproduction of natural dialogue and accuracy in the representation of natural intercourse between men and women of gentle birth and breeding have been found or made compatible with expression in genuine if simple blank verse." Nevertheless, *The Sisters* must be regarded as the least significant of Swinburne's dramas, and as a production almost unworthy of his genius.

*Rosamund, Queen of the Lombards* (1899), is the last in the series of Swinburne's tragedies. He speaks of it as based on "a subject long since mishandled by an English dramatist of all but the highest rank, and one which in later days Alfieri had commemorated in a magnificent passage of a wholly unhistoric and somewhat unsatisfactory play." The works here referred to are Middleton's *The Witch* and Alfieri's *Rosmunda*. The *Rosmunda* of Giovanni Rucellai, a much earlier work, might have been added to this list. The historical framework of all these tragedies may most conveniently be found in Gibbon, in whose pages we read how Rosamund, daughter of the Gepidæ, espoused Alboin, the slayer of her father, how she was forced by her husband to drink wine from her father's skull, and how this founder of the Lombard kingdom fell by the hand of an assassin, whose deed was instigated by the treachery of the queen, taking thus a long-delayed vengeance for her father's death. It is a grim tale, and Swinburne has invested it with all the pity, terror, and tragic irony which it demands. The diction of this drama is marked



by severe restraint, which extends also, by implication at least, to the demeanor, to the very gesture, of the actors concerned. The brooding storm of passion is felt, rather than heard or seen, but the reader is not unprepared for the supreme moment in which it breaks. The inevitable fate of both king and queen is so foreshadowed that when it comes upon them in one swift last moment of the action, the spirit is not so much aroused as calmed, and echoes the words with which, as with the final chorus of a Greek tragedy, the outcome is characterized in this single verse :

“ Let none make moan. This doom is none of man’s.”

It is a far cry from the *Rosamond* of Swinburne’s first volume to this *Rosamund* of his ripened years. Although the poet’s outlook upon life has remained substantially unchanged, and the leading ideas of his youth are the ideas to which he still gives expression, the passing years have by imperceptible degrees so transformed his style that an effective contrast may be made between his earlier and his later manner. Here speaks the *Rosamond* of 1861 :

“ Fear is a cushion for the feet of love,  
Painted with colours for his ease-taking ;  
Sweet red, and white with wasted blood, and blue  
Most flower-like, and the summer-spousèd green  
And sea-betrothed soft purple and burnt black.  
All coloured forms of fear, omen, and change,  
Sick prophecy and rumours lame at heel,  
Anticipations and astrologies,  
Perilous inscription and recorded note,  
All these are covered in the skirt of love,  
And when he shakes it these are tumbled forth,  
Beaten and blown i’ the dusty face of the air.”

Act I.

The *Rosamund* of 1899 yields the following passage :

“ *Rosamund*. Kiss me. Who knows how long the lord of life  
May spare us time for kissing? Life and love  
Are less than change and death.

*Albovine*. What ghosts are they?  
So sweet thou never wast to me before.  
The woman that is God — the God that is  
Woman — the sovereign of the soul of man,  
Our fathers' Freia, Venus crowned in Rome,  
Has lent my love her girdle; but her lips  
Have robbed the red rose of its heart, and left  
No glory for the flower beyond all flowers  
To bid the spring be glad of.”

Act III.

Here is a contrast indeed! The exuberance, the color, the overwrought imagery, the verbal affluence, the Shakespearean diction, of the earlier work have vanished, and in their place we have sheer simplicity of vocabulary, passion intimated rather than expressed, imagery reduced to bare metaphor, and a diction well-nigh shorn of all mannerisms. Noting the vocabulary alone, the later passage offers only half as many words of more than one syllable as are found in the earlier extract. Here is a still more striking example of the reduction of vocabulary to its lowest terms :

“ I take thine oath. I bid not thee take heed  
That I or thou or each of us at once,  
Couldst thou play false, may die: I bid thee think  
Thy bride will die, shamed. Swear me not again  
She shall not: all our trust is set on thee.  
What eyes and ears are keen about us here  
Thou knowest not. Love, my love and thine for her,  
Shall deafen and shall blind them.”

Act II.

In this passage there are seventy-four words, and all but three of them are monosyllables. Swinburne has often been charged with a lack of restraint; the charge is fairly justified by some of his earlier poems, but it assuredly does not lie against the dramatic work of his maturer years. *Rosamund* exemplifies the very extreme of poetic restraint.

The blank verse in which Swinburne's tragedies (with the exception of *Lochrine*) are cast is as distinctively his own as it is possible for such verse to be. A dramatic poet so steeped in the work of his predecessors could hardly escape an occasional echo, and the Elizabethan influence is manifest (although in ever-decreasing degree) throughout his work. In his immature first volume, that influence produces such lines as these:

" We are so more than poor,  
The dear'st of all our spoil would profit you  
Less than mere losing; so most more than weak  
It were but shame for one to smite us, who  
Could but weep louder."

*The Queen Mother*, Act 1, Scene 1.

This is nothing less than Shakespearean mimicry, and other passages may be found that catch the very trick of Fletcher or of Marlowe. Scattered through the Mary Stuart trilogy we may find countless examples of phrases turned in the Elizabethan manner, as well as lines that bring to mind such modern poets as Shelley and Browning. Nevertheless, the style of the poet taken as a whole is individual, and, whatever doubt one might entertain concerning the authorship of a single line or a brief extract, one could have no doubt

whatever of a whole page, any more than one could be puzzled by a page of Browning or of Tennyson. And this dramatic style, which reaches its highest level in *Bothwell* and *Mary Stuart* and *Marino Faliero*, although often too involved and elliptical to make the easiest of reading, has a beauty of cadence, a gravity of movement, and a nobility of diction that may be matched only in the work of the greater English poets.

Dramatic poetry must be judged according to the degree of its excellence in the three elements of style, characterization, and construction. Of the style of Swinburne's tragedies something has just been said, and the foregoing discussion of the separate works has brought forward the most conspicuous examples of his skill in portraiture. His delineation of *Mary Stuart* is a masterpiece of subtle penetration into the inmost recesses of a complex nature, and his conception of the historical figures by which hers is surrounded affords further evidence of his insight into character. His constructive powers, while perhaps most clearly exhibited in the dramas whose subject-matter gave him a comparatively free hand, were put to their severest test in the historical trilogy, and there achieved their most signal triumph. To give artistic symmetry to each of the separate sections of that work, and artistic unity to the whole, while keeping the historical facts — even of the minuter sort — all the time strictly in view, was a task to daunt the most courageous, and its successful performance must be reckoned among the most remarkable feats in our dramatic literature.

In the *Dedicatory Epistle* which prefaces his collected poems, and from which numerous quotations have already been made in the present Introduction, Swinburne says this of his plays as a whole : “ Charles Lamb, as I need not remind you, wrote for antiquity : nor need you be assured that when I write plays it is with a view to their being acted at the Globe, the Red Bull, or the Black Friars.” It is certain that they are not likely to be acted elsewhere, under the conditions at present surrounding the English-speaking stage, although a private performance of *Lochrine* was given in London a few years ago, and other tentative and experimental performances may occasionally be brought about. It is interesting to inquire why these works, and other works of their class, should not be put upon the stage. To this inquiry there are two widely different answers. The simplest of them, while a superficial answer, begging the question at issue, is found satisfying to many writers upon the drama. It is that these works are unfitted for the stage. This is true, no doubt ; nevertheless, the answer which the question demands must be given from a very different point of view, and should inform us that the stage — the English stage — has unfitted itself for the production of these plays, or of any plays having a serious literary value. In other words, the stage, turning away from its great early tradition, and becoming more and more a vehicle of mere entertainment, less and less a medium for the investment of exalted ideals with the trappings of actuality, has during the last century done its best to divorce itself from literature, with a degree of success

of which its present pitiable estate affords convincing evidence. English dramatic poets, on the other hand, finding themselves unwelcome in the playhouse, have ceased to heed its requirements, and have written their plays with an eye to the satisfaction of the reader alone.

There has thus appeared in English poetry the singular phenomenon of the closet drama — a species of composition which does not exist in any other modern literature to anything like the same extent. For several generations now the playhouse and the poet have been completely at odds, with the curious result that our acting plays are devoid of literary quality, while the closet drama absorbs all the energies of the men to whom we should rightly look for the rehabilitation of the theatre. Swinburne, writing of his own *Marino Faliero*, shows a clear comprehension of the contrast between past and present conditions, when he says that this work, “hopelessly impossible as it is from the point of view of modern stagecraft, could hardly have been found too untheatrical, too utterly given over to thought without action, by the audiences which endured and applauded the magnificent monotony of Chapman’s eloquence — the fervent and inexhaustible declamation which was offered and accepted as a substitute for study of character and interest of action when his two finest plays, if plays they can be called, found favour with an incredibly intelligent and an inconceivably tolerant audience.” This comparison is possibly a little forced, and is not altogether ingenuous, for Chapman’s plays were hardly as successful as Swinburne would have us believe, and what success they

had must be attributed in large measure to the melodramatic action which offsets their copious philosophizing. But as a protest against the narrowness of "modern stagecraft," the plea at least deserves a respectful hearing.

We must admit the closet drama to be a fact in the development of modern English literature, but we may doubt the wisdom of calling it a "heresy," as Professor Brander Matthews does, or of saying with him that "by the ill-advised action of certain English poets the breach between the stage and the men-of-letters was made to appear wider than it ought to have been." An action could not be ill-advised that was absolutely necessary if the dignity of a great literary form was to be preserved, and the "unactable dramatic poems" of Tennyson and Browning and Swinburne, besides being a rich present contribution to literature, may quite possibly at some future time come to be regarded as having exerted a powerful indirect influence upon the restoration of the English stage to its once forfeited estate. These men may then be honored for having kept the faith, instead of being censured, as they now are, for refusing to make terms with a narrow and degraded dramaturgy.

The chief tendency of the modern acting drama has been toward the development of a refined technique, and no one will deny that this is a praiseworthy aim. But technique cannot provide the substance of any art, and a play may be a technical masterpiece, yet fail lamentably in its ultimate purpose. The playwright bent upon technique is in danger of sacrificing beauty

and truth and vitality to the requirements of mere stagecraft. Most modern dramatists have succumbed in some degree to this danger, and English dramatists more than others. Our average play-goer, fed all his life upon dramatic husks, finds himself at a loss in the presence of serious drama ; his faculties have become atrophied and his senses dulled. The only play that gives him any pleasure is the one in which something new (and, by preference, something unexpected) happens at every moment, the play which tickles his palate as with condiments, the play which makes no demands upon the reflective side of his nature. His is the verdict by which the closet drama is condemned, and its advocates are fairly warranted in appealing to the judgment of a higher tribunal.

If we seek for the exact reason why such plays as these of Swinburne may not hope to meet with favor in the actual playhouse, it will be found in the fact that they have too much declamation and too little action for the taste of the play-goer. But for Elizabethan audiences, as Swinburne has pointed out, long speeches were no hindrance to enjoyment, and a similar remark may be made of the audiences for whom Corneille and Racine wrote plays in the great age of the French theatre. And it is surely something more than tolerant endurance that a modern French audience accords to these classics, or a modern German audience accords to *Torquato Tasso* and *Nathan der Weise*. If our own stage had not lost almost all contact with literature, it would make a much larger and more intelligent use of our classics than it now does, and might



even unearth many a treasure now buried in the libraries and known only to the student of literature.

The upshot of these considerations seems to be that our stage, being controlled by a low, or at least a limited, sort of dramatic intelligence, is primarily responsible for the existence of the closet drama. And yet the great popularity of such plays as Knowles's *Virginus* and Bulwer's *Richelieu* shows that the poetic form offers no insuperable barrier to public favor, while the more modest but still distinctly pronounced success of Browning's *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon* and Tennyson's *Becket* gives evidence that the highest poetic genius may sometimes be something more than tolerated by our theatre-going audiences. The success with which such minor dramas as Milman's *Fazio* and Talfourd's *Ion* have occasionally been presented provides an encouraging subject for reflection, and the contemporary applause which has greeted the poetic dramas of Stephen Phillips is an augury of excellent omen. If these plays have found a public from time to time, why may we not expect that a public of some sort may yet be found for Shelley's *The Cenci* and Landor's *Count Julian* and Browning's *Strafford* and Tennyson's *Harold*—even for Swinburne's *Mary Stuart* and *Marino Faliero*? At all events, the works named in this paragraph are sufficient to make clear the fact that there is no hard and fast line between the drama of the stage and the drama of the closet, that it is possible to pass by nearly insensible gradations from the most obviously actable of plays to those that appear most remote from the practical requirements of the playhouse.

Nor does it seem altogether unreasonable to hope that English audiences may gradually acquire enough of the seriousness and artistic conscience of German and French audiences to bring more and more of the dramas now neglected within the margin of actability, and to annex to the empire of the stage much of that province of dramatic literature which is at present explored by readers alone. When that change of heart is experienced, the drama may once more occupy its rightful position in English literature, and again become — what it has never ceased to be in the literature of Continental Europe — a manifestation of the deepest consciousness of the race, and an embodiment of its highest idealism.

W. M. PAYNE.

# Mary Stuart

## A Tragedy

ἀντὶ μὲν ἐχθρᾶς γλώσσης ἐχθρὰ  
γλῶσσα τελείσθω· τοῦφειλόμενον  
πράσσουσα δίκη μέγ' αὐτεῖ·  
ἀντὶ δὲ πληγῆς φονίας φονίαν  
πληγὴν τινέτω· δράσαντι παθεῖν,  
τριγέρων μῦθος τάδε φωνεῖ.

ÆSCH. *Cho.* 309-315

## SOURCES

A considerable portion of this drama consists of fairly close paraphrase from the contemporary sources of the history of Mary Stuart. The more significant passages of this character are indicated in the *Notes*. The greater part of the material that Swinburne has thus used may be found in the *State Trials*, in Labanoff's *Recueil des Lettres, Instructions, et Mémoires de Marie Stuart, Reine d'Ecosse*, and in the *Letter Book* of Sir Amias Paulet.

I DEDICATE THIS PLAY,  
NO LONGER, AS THE FIRST PART OF THE TRILOGY  
WHICH IT COMPLETES WAS DEDICATED,  
TO THE GREATEST EXILE, BUT SIMPLY  
TO THE GREATEST MAN OF FRANCE :  
TO THE CHIEF OF LIVING POETS :  
TO THE FIRST DRAMATIST OF HIS AGE :  
TO MY BELOVED AND REVERED MASTER  
VICTOR HUGO.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MARY STUART.  
MARY BEATON.  
QUEEN ELIZABETH.  
BARBARA MOWBRAY.  
LORD BURGHEY.  
SIR FRANCIS WALSINGHAM.  
WILLIAM DAVISON.  
ROBERT DUDLEY, *Earl of Leicester*.  
GEORGE TALBOT, *Earl of Shrewsbury*.  
EARL OF KENT.  
HENRY CAREY, *Lord Hunsdon*.  
SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON.  
SIR THOMAS BROMLEY, *Lord Chancellor*.  
POPHAM, *Attorney-General*.  
EGERTON, *Solicitor-General*.  
GAWDY, *The Queen's Sergeant*.  
SIR AMYAS PAULET.  
SIR DREW DRURY.  
SIR THOMAS GORGES.  
SIR WILLIAM WADE.  
SIR ANDREW MELVILLE.  
ROBERT BEALE, *Clerk of the Council*.  
CURL and NAU, *Secretaries to the Queen of Scots*.  
GORION, *her Apothecary*.  
FATHER JOHN BALLARD,  
ANTHONY BABINGTON,  
CHIDIOCK TICHBORNE,  
JOHN SAVAGE,  
CHARLES TILNEY,  
EDWARD ABINGTON,  
THOMAS SALISBURY,  
ROBERT BARNWELL,  
THOMAS PHILLIPPS, *Secretary to WALSINGHAM*.  
M. DE CHÂTEAUNEUF.  
M. DE BELLIÈVRE.

} *Conspirators.*

*Commissioners, Privy Councillors, Sheriffs, Citizens, Officers,  
and Attendants.*

*Time — FROM AUGUST 14, 1586, TO FEBRUARY 18, 1587.*

ACT I

ANTHONY BABINGTON





## ACT I.

SCENE I. — *Babington's Lodging: a veiled picture on the wall.*

*Enter Babington, Tichborne, Tilney, Abington, Salisbury, and Barnwell.*

*Babington.* Welcome, good friends, and welcome this good day

That casts out hope and brings in certainty  
To turn raw spring to summer. Now not long  
The flower that crowns the front of all our faiths  
Shall bleach to death in prison; now the trust 5  
That took the night with fire as of a star  
Grows red and broad as sunrise in our sight  
Who held it dear and desperate once, now sure,  
But not more dear, being surer. In my hand  
I hold this England and her brood, and all 10  
That time out of the chance of all her fate  
Makes hopeful or makes fearful: days and years,  
Triumphs and changes bred for praise or shame  
From the unborn womb of these unknown, are  
ours

That stand yet noteless here; ours even as God's 15  
Who puts them in our hand as his, to wield  
And shape to service godlike. None of you

But this day strikes out of the scroll of death  
 And writes apart immortal; what we would,  
 That have we; what our fathers, brethren, peers, 20  
 Bled and beheld not, died and might not win,  
 That may we see, touch, handle, hold it fast,  
 May take to bind our brows with. By my life,  
 I think none ever had such hap alive  
 As ours upon whose plighted lives are set 25  
 The whole good hap and evil of the state  
 And of the Church of God and world of men  
 And fortune of all crowns and creeds that hang  
 Now on the creed and crown of this our land,  
 To bring forth fruit to our resolve, and bear 30  
 What sons to time it please us; whose mere will  
 Is father of the future.

*Tilney.* Have you said?

*Bab.* I cannot say too much of so much good.

*Til.* Say nothing then a little, and hear one  
 while:

Your talk struts high and swaggers loud for joy, 35  
 And safely may perchance, or may not, here;  
 But why to-day we know not.

*Bab.* No, I swear,  
 Ye know not yet, no man of us but one,  
 No man on earth; one woman knows, and I,  
 I that best know her the best begot of man 40  
 And noblest; no king born so kingly-souled,  
 Nor served of such brave servants.

*Tichborne.*

What, as we ?

*Bab.* Is there one vein in one of all our hearts  
That is not blown aflame as fire with air  
With even the thought to serve her ? and, by  
God,

45

They that would serve had need be bolder found  
Than common kings find servants.

*Salisbury.*

Well, your cause ?

What need or hope has this day's heat brought  
forth

To blow such fire up in you ?

*Bab.*

Hark you, sirs ;

The time is come, ere I shall speak of this,  
To set again the seal on our past oaths  
And bind their trothplight faster than it is  
With one more witness ; not for shameful doubt,  
But love and perfect honour. Gentlemen,  
Whose souls are brethren sealed and sworn to  
mine,

50

55

Friends that have taken on your hearts and hands  
The selfsame work and weight of deed as I,  
Look on this picture ; from its face to-day  
Thus I pluck off the muffled mask, and bare  
Its likeness and our purpose. Ay, look here ;  
None of these faces but are friends of each,  
None of these lips unsworn to all the rest,  
None of these hands unpledged. Know ye not  
What these have bound their souls to ? and my-  
self,

60

I that stand midmost painted here of all, 65  
Have I not right to wear of all this ring  
The topmost flower of danger? Who but I  
Should crown and close this goodly circle up  
Of friends I call my followers? There ye stand,  
Fashioned all five in likeness of mere life, 70  
Just your own shapes, even all the man but  
    speech,  
As in a speckless mirror; Tichborne, thou,  
My nearest heart and brother next in deed,  
Then Abington, there Salisbury, Tilney there,  
And Barnwell, with the brave bright Irish eye 75  
That burns with red remembrance of the blood  
Seen drenching those green fields turned brown  
    and grey  
Where fire can burn not faith out, nor the sword  
That hews the boughs off lop the root there set  
To spread in spite of axes. Friends, take heed; 80  
These are not met for nothing here in show  
Nor for poor pride set forth and boastful heart  
To make dumb brag of the undone deed, and  
    wear  
The ghost and mockery of a crown unearned  
Before their hands have wrought it for their heads 85  
Out of a golden danger, glorious doubt,  
An act incomparable, by all time's mouths  
To be more blessed and cursed than all deeds  
    done



*Bab.* Ay, but, see,  
 Your apish poet's-likeness holds not here,  
 If he that fed his hounds on his changed flesh 115  
 Was charmed out of a man and bayed to death  
 But through pure anger of a perfect maid ;  
 For she that should of huntsmen turn us harts  
 Is Dian but in mouths of her own knaves,  
 And in paid eyes hath only godhead on 120  
 And light to dazzle none but them to death.  
 Yet I durst well abide her, and proclaim  
 As goddess-like as maiden.

*Barnwell.* Why, myself  
 Was late at court in presence, and her eyes  
 Fixed somehow on me full in face ; yet, 'faith, 125  
 I felt for that no lightning in my blood  
 Nor blast in mine as of the sun at noon  
 To blind their balls with godhead ; no, ye see,  
 I walk yet well enough.

*Abington.* She gazed at you ?

*Barn.* Yes, 'faith ; yea, surely ; take a Puritan  
 oath 130  
 To seal my faith for Catholic. What, God help,  
 Are not mine eyes yet whole then ? am I blind  
 Or maimed or scorched, and know not ? by my  
 head,  
 I find it sit yet none the worse for fear  
 To be so thunder-blasted.

*Abing.* Hear you, sirs ? 135

*Tich.* I was not fain to hear it.

*Barn.* Which was he  
Spake of one changed into a hart? by God,  
There be some hearts here need no charm, I  
think,  
To turn them hares of hunters; or if deer,  
Not harts but hinds, and rascal.

*Bab.* Peace, man, peace! 140  
Let not at least this noble cry of hounds  
Flash fangs against each other. See what verse  
I bade write under on the picture here:  
*These are my comrades, whom the peril's self  
Draws to it; how say you? will not all in the*  
end 145

Prove fellows to me? how should one fall off  
Whom danger lures and scares not? Tush, take  
hands;

It was to keep them fast in all time's sight  
I bade my painter set you here, and me  
Your loving captain; gave him sight of each 150  
And order of us all in amity.  
And if this yet not shame you, or your hearts  
Be set as boys' on wrangling, yet, behold,  
I pluck as from my heart this witness forth

*Taking out a letter.*

To what a work we are bound to, even her hand 155  
Whom we must bring from bondage, and again  
Be brought of her to honour. This is she,

Mary the queen, sealed of herself and signed  
As mine assured good friend for ever. Now,  
Am I more worth or Ballard?

*Til.* He it was 160  
Bade get her hand and seal to allow of all  
That should be practised; he is wise.

*Bab.* Ay, wise!  
He was in peril too, he said, God wot,  
And must have surety of her, he; but I,  
'T is I that have it, and her heart and trust, 165  
See all here else, her trust and her good love  
Who knows mine own heart of mine own hand  
writ  
And sent her for assurance.

*Sal.* This we know;  
What we would yet have certified of you  
Is her own heart sent back, you say, for yours. 170

*Bab.* I say? not I, but proof says here, cries  
out  
Her perfect will and purpose. Look you, first  
She writes me what good comfort hath she had  
To know by letter mine estate, and thus  
Reknit the bond of our intelligence, 175  
As grief was hers to live without the same  
This great while past; then lovingly commends  
In me her own desire to avert betimes  
Our enemies' counsel to root out our faith  
With ruin of us all; for so she hath shown 180



All Catholic princes what long since they have  
wrought

Against the king of Spain; and all this while  
The Catholics naked here to all misuse  
Fall off in numbered force, in means and power,  
And if we look not to it shall soon lack strength 185  
To rise and take that hope or help by the hand  
Which time shall offer them; and see for this  
What heart is hers! she bids you know of me  
Though she were no part of this cause, who  
holds

Worthless her own weighed with the general  
weal, 190

She will be still most willing to this end  
To employ therein her life and all she hath  
Or in this world may look for.

*Tich.* This rings well;  
But by what present mean prepared doth hers  
Confirm your counsel? or what way set forth 195  
So to prevent our enemies with good speed  
That at the goal we find them not, and there  
Fall as men broken?

*Bab.* Nay, what think you, man,  
Or what esteem of her, that hope should lack  
Herein her counsel? hath she not been found 200  
Most wary still, clear-spirited, bright of wit,  
Keen as a sword's edge, as a bird's eye swift,  
Man-hearted ever? First, for crown and base

Of all this enterprize, she bids me here  
 Examine with good heed of good event 205  
 What power of horse and foot among us all  
 We may well muster, and in every shire  
 Choose out what captain for them, if we lack  
 For the main host a general; — as indeed  
 Myself being bound to bring her out of bonds 210  
 Or here with you cut off the heretic queen  
 Could take not this on me; — what havens,  
                   towns,

What ports to north and west and south, may we  
 Assure ourselves to hold in certain hand  
 For entrance and receipt of help from France, 215  
 From Spain, or the Low Countries; in what  
                   place

Draw our main head together; for how long  
 Raise for this threefold force of foreign friends  
 Wage and munition, or what harbours choose  
 For these to land; or what provision crave 220  
 Of coin at need or armour; by what means  
 The six her friends deliberate to proceed;  
 And last the manner how to get her forth  
 From this last hold wherein she newly lies:  
 These heads hath she set down, and bids me  
                   take 225

Of all seven points counsel and common care  
 With as few friends as may be of the chief  
 Ranged on our part for actors; and thereon

Of all devised with diligent speed despatch  
Word to the ambassador of Spain in France, 230  
Who to the experience past of all the estate  
Here on this side aforetime that he hath  
Shall join goodwill to serve us.

*Til.* Ay, no more?

Of us no more I mean, who being most near  
To the English queen our natural mistress born 235  
Take on our hands, her household pensioners',  
The stain and chiefest peril of her blood  
Shed by close violence under trust; no word,  
No care shown further of our enterprise  
That flowers to fruit for her sake?

*Bab.* Fear not that; 240

Abide till we draw thither — ay — she bids  
Get first assurance of such help to come,  
And take thereafter, what before were vain,  
Swift order to provide arms, horses, coin,  
Wherewith to march at word from every shire 245  
Given by the chief; and save these principals  
Let no man's knowledge less in place partake  
The privy ground we move on, but set forth  
For entertainment of the meaner ear  
We do but fortify us against the plot 250  
Laid of the Puritan part in all this realm  
That have their general force now drawn to head  
In the Low Countries, whence being home re-  
turned

They think to spoil us utterly, and usurp  
 Not from her only and all else lawful heirs 255  
 The kingly power, but from their queen that is  
 (As we may let the bruit fly forth disguised)  
 Wrest that which now she hath, if she for fear  
 Take not their yoke upon her, and therefrom  
 Catch like infection from plague-tainted air 260  
 The purulence of their purity; with which plea  
 We so may stablish our confederacies  
 As wrought but for defence of lands, lives, goods,  
 From them that would cut off our faith and these;  
 No word writ straight or given directly forth 265  
 Against the queen, but rather showing our will  
 Firm to maintain her and her lineal heirs,  
*Myself* (she saith) *not named*. Ha, gallant souls,  
 Hath our queen's craft no savour of sweet wit,  
 No brain to help her heart with?

*Tich.*

But our end — 270

No word of this yet?

*Bab.*

And a good word, here,

And worth our note, good friend; being thus  
 prepared,

Time then shall be to set our hands on work  
 And straight thereon take order that she may  
 Be suddenly transported out of guard, 275  
 Not tarrying till our foreign force come in,  
 Which then must make the hotter haste; and  
 seeing

We can make no day sure for our design  
Nor certain hour appointed when she might  
Find other friends at hand on spur of the act 280  
To take her forth of prison, ye should have  
About you always, or in court at least,  
Scouts furnished well with horses of good speed  
To bear the tiding to her and them whose charge  
Shall be to bring her out of bonds, that these 285  
May be about her ere her keeper have word  
What deed is freshly done; in any case,  
Ere he can make him strong within the house  
Or bear her forth of it: and need it were  
By divers ways to send forth two or three 290  
That one may pass if one be stayed; nor this  
Should we forget, to assay in the hour of need  
To cut the common posts off; by this plot  
May we steer safe, and fall not miserably,  
As they that laboured heretofore herein, 295  
Through overhaste to stir upon this side  
Ere surety make us strong of strangers' aid.  
And if at first we bring her forth of bonds,  
Be well assured, she bids us — as I think  
She doubts not me that I should let this slip, 300  
Forget so main a matter — well assured  
To set her in the heart of some strong host,  
Or strength of some good hold, where she may  
stay  
Till we be mustered and the ally drawn in;

For should the queen, being scatheless of us yet 305  
 As we unready, fall upon her flight,  
 The bird untimely fled from snare to snare  
 Should find being caught again a narrower hold  
 Whence she should fly forth never, if cause  
       indeed

Should seem not given to use her worse; and we 310  
 Should be with all extremity pursued,  
 To her more grief; for this should grieve her  
       more

Than what might heaviest fall upon her.

*Til.*

Ay?

She hath had then work enough to do to weep  
 For them that bled before; Northumberland, 315  
 The choice of all the north spoiled, banished,  
       slain,  
 Norfolk that should have ringed the fourth sad  
       time

The fairest hand wherewith fate ever led  
 So many a man to deathward, or sealed up  
 So many an eye from sunlight.

*Bab.*

By my head, 320

Which is the main stake of this cast, I swear  
 There is none worth more than a tear of hers  
 That man wears living or that man might lose,  
 Borne upright in the sun, or for her sake  
 Bowed down by theirs she weeps for: nay, but  
       hear;

She bids me take most vigilant heed, that all  
 May prosperously find end assured, and you  
 Conclude with me in judgment; to myself  
 As chief of trust in my particular  
 Refers you for assurance, and commends 330  
 To counsel seasonable and time's advice  
 Your common resolution; and again,  
 If the design take yet not hold, as chance  
 For all our will may turn it, we should not  
 Pursue her transport nor the plot laid else 335  
 Of our so baffled enterprise; but say  
 When this were done we might not come at her  
 Being by mishap close guarded in the Tower  
 Or some strength else as dangerous, yet, she  
 saith,  
 For God's sake leave not to proceed herein 340  
 To the utmost undertaking; for herself  
 At any time shall most contentedly  
 Die, knowing of our deliverance from the bonds  
 Wherein as slaves we are holden.

*Barn.*

So shall I,

Knowing at the least of her enfranchisement 345  
 Whose life were worth the whole blood shed o'  
 the world

And all men's hearts made empty.

*Bab.*

Ay, good friend,

Here speaks she of your fellows, that some stir  
 Might be in Ireland laboured to begin

Some time ere we take aught on us, that thence 350  
 The alarm might spring right on the part opposed  
 To where should grow the danger: she mean-  
 time

Should while the work were even in hand assay  
 To make the Catholics in her Scotland rise  
 And put her son into their hands, that so 355  
 No help may serve our enemies thence; again,  
 That from our plots the stroke may come, she  
 thinks

To have some chief or general head of all  
 Were now most apt for the instant end; where-  
 in

I branch not off from her in counsel, yet 360  
 Conceive not how to send the appointed word  
 To the Earl of Arundel now fast in bonds  
 Held in the Tower she spake of late, who now  
 Would have us give him careful note of this,  
 Him or his brethren; and from oversea 365  
 Would have us seek, if he be there at large,  
 To the young son of dead Northumberland,  
 And Westmoreland, whose hand and name, we  
 know,

May do much northward; ay, but this we know,  
 How much his hand was lesser than his name 370  
 When proof was put on either; and the lord  
 Paget, whose power is in some shires of weight  
 To incline them usward; both may now be had



And some, she saith, of the exiles principal,  
If the enterprise be resolute once, with these 375  
May come back darkling; Paget lies in Spain,  
Whom we may treat with by his brother's mean,  
Charles, who keeps watch in Paris: then in the  
end

She bids beware no messenger sent forth  
That bears our counsel bear our letters; these 380  
Must through blind hands precede them or en-  
sue

By ignorant posts and severally despatched;  
And of her sweet wise heart, as we were fools,  
—But that I think she fears not—bids take heed  
Of spies among us and false brethren, chief 385  
Of priests already practised on, she saith,  
By the enemy's craft against us; what, forsooth,  
We have not eyes to set such knaves apart  
And look their wiles through, but should need  
misdoubt

—Whom shall I say the least on all our side?— 390  
Good Gilbert Gifford with his kind boy's face  
That fear's lean self could fear not? but God  
knows

Woman is wise, but woman; none so bold,  
So cunning none, God help the soft sweet wit,  
But the fair flesh with weakness taints it; why, 395  
She warns me here of perilous scrolls to keep  
That I should never bear about me, seeing



Her prison-place from Stafford, where few folk<sup>420</sup>  
Use to pass over, on the same day set,  
With fifty or threescore men well horsed and  
armed,

To take her from her keeper's charge, who rides  
With but some score that bear but pistols; next,  
To come by deep night round the darkling house<sup>425</sup>  
And fire the barns and stables, which being nigh  
Shall draw the household huddling forth to help,  
And they that come to serve her, wearing each  
A secret sign for note and cognizance,  
May some of them surprise the house, whom she<sup>430</sup>  
Shall with her servants meet and second; last,  
When carts come in at morning, these being met  
In the main gateway's midst may by device  
Fall or be sidelong overthrown, and we  
Make in thereon and suddenly possess <sup>435</sup>  
The house whence lightly might we bear her  
forth

Ere help came in of soldiers to relief  
Who lie a mile or half a mile away  
In several lodgings: but howe'er this end  
She holds her bounden to me all her days <sup>440</sup>  
Who proffer me to hazard for her love,  
And doubtless shall as well esteem of you  
Or scarce less honourably, when she shall know  
Your names who serve beneath me; so com-  
mends

Her friend to God, and bids me burn the word<sup>445</sup>  
 That I would wear at heart for ever; yet,  
 Lest this sweet scripture haply write us dead,  
 Where she set hand I set my lips, and thus  
 Rend mine own heart with her sweet name, and  
 end. *Tears the letter.*

*Sal.* She hath chosen a trusty servant.

*Bab.* *Ay, of me?*<sup>450</sup>  
 What ails you at her choice? was this not I  
 That laid the ground of all this work, and  
 wrought

Your hearts to shape for service? or perchance  
 The man was you that took this first on him,  
 To serve her dying and living, and put on <sup>455</sup>  
 The bloodred name of traitor and the deed  
 Found for her sake not murderous?

*Sal.* *Why, they sa'*  
 First Gifford put this on you, Ballard next,  
 Whom he brought over to redeem your heart  
 Half lost for doubt already, and refresh <sup>460</sup>  
 The flagging flame that fired it first, and now  
 Fell faltering half in ashes, whence his breath  
 Hardly with hard pains quickened it and blew  
 The grey to red rekindling.

*Bab.* *Sir, they lie*  
 Who say for fear I faltered, or lost heart <sup>465</sup>  
 For doubt to lose life after; let such know  
 It shames me not though I were slow of will

To take such work upon my soul and hand  
 As killing of a queen; being once assured,  
 Brought once past question, set beyond men's  
 doubts 470

By witness of God's will borne sensibly,  
 Meseems I have swerved not.

*Sal.* Ay, when once the word  
 Was washed in holy water, you would wear  
 Lightly the name so hallowed of priests' lips  
 That men spell murderer; but till Ballard spake 475  
 The shadow of her slaying whom we shall strike  
 Was ice to freeze your purpose.

*Tich.* Friend, what then?  
 Is this so small a thing, being English born,  
 To strike the living empire here at heart  
 That is called England? stab her present state, 480  
 Give even her false-faced likeness up to death,  
 With hands that smite a woman? I that speak,  
 Ye know me if now my faith be firm, and will  
 To do faith's bidding; yet it wrings not me  
 To say I was not quick nor light of heart, 485  
 Though moved perforce of will unwillingly,  
 To take in trust this charge upon me.

*Barn.* I  
 With all good will would take, and give God  
 thanks,  
 The charge of all that falter in it: by heaven,  
 To hear in the end of doubts and doublings  
 heaves 490

My heart up as with sickness. Why, by this  
 The heretic harlot that confounds our hope  
 Should be made carrion, with those following four  
 That were to wait upon her dead : all five  
 Live yet to scourge God's servants, and we prate 495  
 And threaten here in painting : by my life,  
 I see no more in us of life or heart  
 Than in this heartless picture.

*Bab.*

Peace again ;

Our purpose shall not long lack life, nor they  
 Whose life is deadly to the heart of ours 500  
 Much longer keep it ; Burghley, Walsingham,  
 Hunsdon and Knowles, all these four names  
 writ out,

With hers at head they worship, are but now  
 As those five several letters that spell death  
 In eyes that read them right. Give me but faith 505  
 A little longer : trust that heart awhile  
 Which laid the ground of all our glories ; think  
 I that was chosen of our queen's friends in  
 France,

By Morgan's hand there prisoner for her sake  
 On charge of such a deed's device as ours 510  
 Commended to her for trustiest, and a man  
 More sure than might be Ballard and more fit  
 To bear the burden of her counsels — I  
 Can be not undeserving, whom she trusts,  
 That ye should likewise trust me ; seeing at first 515







Too hot of heart to serve her ! And for me,  
Am I so vain a thing of wind and smoke  
That your deep counsel must have care to keep 565  
My lightness safe in wardship? I sought  
none —

Craved no man's counsel to draw plain my plot,  
Need no man's warning to dispose my deed.  
Have I not laid of mine own hand a snare  
To bring no less a lusty bird to lure 570  
Than Walsingham with proffer of myself  
For scout and spy on mine own friends in  
France

To fill his wise wide ears with large report  
Of all things wrought there on our side, and  
plots

Laid for our queen's sake ? and for all his wit 575  
This politic knave misdoubts me not, whom ye  
Hold yet too light and lean of wit to pass  
Unspied of wise men on our enemies' part,  
Who have sealed the subtlest eyes up of them  
all.

*Tich.* That would I know ; for if they be  
not blind, 580

But only wink upon your proffer, seeing  
More than they let your own eyes find or fear,  
Why, there may lurk a fire to burn us all  
Masked in them with false blindness.

*Bab.*

Hear you, sirs ?

Now by the faith I had in this my friend 585  
 And by mine own yet flawless toward him, yea  
 By all true love and trust that holds men fast,  
 It shames me that I held him in this cause  
 Half mine own heart, my better hand and eye,  
 Mine other soul and worthier. Pray you, go ; 590  
 Let us not hold you ; sir, be quit of us ;  
 Go home, lie safe, and give God thanks ; lie  
     close,  
 Keep your head warm and covered ; nay, be  
     wise ;  
 We are fit for no such wise folk's fellowship,  
 No married man's who being bid forth to fight 595  
 Holds his wife's kirtle fitter wear for man  
 Than theirs who put on iron : I did know it,  
 Albeit I would not know ; this man that was,  
 This soul and sinew of a noble seed,  
 Love and the lips that burn a bridegroom's  
     through 600  
 Have charmed to deathward, and in steel's good  
     stead  
 Left him a silken spirit.

*Tich.*

By that faith

Which yet I think you have found as fast in me  
 As ever yours I found, you wrong me more  
 Than were I that your words can make me not 605  
 I had wronged myself and all our cause ; I hold  
 No whit less dear for love's sake even than love

Faith, honour, friendship, all that all my days  
 Was only dear to my desire, till now  
 This new thing dear as all these only were 610  
 Made all these dearer. If my love be less  
 Toward you, toward honour or this cause, then  
 think

I love my wife not either, whom you know  
 How close at heart I cherish, but in all  
 Play false alike. Lead now which way you will, 615  
 And wear what likeness; though to all men else  
 It look not smooth, smooth shall it seem to me,  
 And danger be not dangerous; where you go,  
 For me shall wildest ways be safe, and straight  
 For me the steepest; with your eyes and heart 620  
 Will I take count of life and death, and think  
 No thought against your counsel: yea, by hea-  
 ven,

I had rather follow and trust my friend and die  
 Than halt and hark mistrustfully behind  
 To live of him mistrusted.

*Bab.* Why, well said: 625  
 Strike hands upon it; I think you shall not find  
 A trustless pilot of me. Keep we fast,  
 And hold you fast my counsel, we shall see  
 The state high-builded here of heretic hope  
 Shaken to dust and death. Here comes more  
 proof 630

To warrant me no liar. You are welcome, sirs;

*Enter Ballard, disguised, and Savage.*

Good father captain, come you plumed or  
cowled,

Or stoled or sworded, here at any hand  
The true heart bids you welcome.

*Ballard.* Sir, at none

Is folly welcome to mine ears or eyes. 635

Nay, stare not on me stormily ; I say,

I bid at no hand welcome, by no name,

Be it ne'er so wise or valiant on men's lips,

Pledge health to folly, nor forecast good hope

For them that serve her, I, but take of men 640

Things ill done ill at any hand alike.

Ye shall not say I cheered you to your death,

Nor would, though nought more dangerous than  
your death

Or deadlier for our cause and God's in ours

Were here to stand the chance of, and your blood 645

Shed vainly with no seed for faith to sow

Should be not poison for men's hopes to drink.

What is this picture ? Have ye sense or souls,

Eyes, ears, or wits to take assurance in

Of how ye stand in strange men's eyes and ears, 650

How fare upon their talking tongues, how dwell

In shot of their suspicion, and sustain

How great a work how lightly ? Think ye not

These men have ears and eyes about your  
ways,

Walk with your feet, work with your hands,  
and watch 655

When ye sleep sound and babble in your sleep ?  
What knave was he, or whose man sworn and  
spy,

That drank with you last night ? whose hireling  
lip

Was this that pledged you, Master Babington,  
To a foul quean's downfall and a fair queen's  
rise ? 660

Can ye not seal your tongues from tavern  
speech,

Nor sup abroad but air may catch it back,  
Nor think who set that watch upon your lips  
Yourselves can keep not on them ?

*Bab.* What, my friends !

Here is one come to counsel, God be thanked, 665  
That bears commission to rebuke us all.

Why, hark you, sir, you that speak judgment,  
you

That take our doom upon your double tongue  
To sentence and accuse us with one breath,  
Our doomsman and our justicer for sin, 670  
Good Captain Ballard, Father Fortescue,  
Who made you guardian of us poor men, gave  
Your wisdom wardship of our follies, chose  
Your faith for keeper of our faiths, that yet  
Were never taxed of change or doubted ? You, 675

'T is you that have an eye to us, and take note  
What time we keep, what place, what company,  
How far may wisdom trust us to be wise  
Or faith esteem us faithful, and yourself  
Were once the hireling hand and tongue and eye 680  
That waited on this very Walsingham  
To spy men's counsels and betray their blood  
Whose trust had sealed you trusty? By God's  
light,

A goodly guard I have of you, to crave  
What man was he I drank with yesternight, 685  
What name, what shape, what habit, as, forsooth,  
Were I some statesman's knave and spotted spy,  
The man I served, and cared not how, being  
dead,

His molten gold should glut my throat in hell,  
Might question of me whom I snared last night, 690  
Make inquisition of his face, his gait,  
His speech, his likeness. Well, be answered  
then ;

By God, I know not ; but God knows I think  
The spy most dangerous on my secret walks  
And witness of my ways most worth my fear 695  
And deadliest listener to devour my speech  
Now questions me of danger, and the tongue  
Most like to sting my trust and life to death  
Now taxes mine of rashness.

*Bal.*

Is he mad ?

Or are ye brainsick all with heat of wine 700  
That stand and hear him rage like men in  
storms

Made drunk with danger? have ye sworn with  
him

To die the fool's death too of furious fear  
And passion scared to slaughter of itself?  
Is there none here that knows his cause or me, 705  
Nor what should save or spoil us?

*Tich.* Friend, give ear;  
For God's sake, yet be counselled.

*Bab.* Ay, for God's!  
What part hath God in this man's counsels?  
nay,

Take you part with him; nay, in God's name  
go;

What should you do to bide with me? turn back; 710  
There stands your captain.

*Savage.* Hath not one man here  
One spark in spirit or sprinkling left of shame?  
I that looked once for no such fellowship,  
But soldier's hearts in shapes of gentlemen,  
I am sick with shame to hear men's jangling  
tongues 715

Outnoise their swords unbloodied. Hear me,  
sirs;

My hand keeps time before my tongue, and hath  
But wit to speak in iron; yet as now

Such wit were sharp enough to serve our turn  
That keenest tongues may serve not. One thing

sworn

720

Calls on our hearts ; the queen must singly die,  
Or we, half dead men now with dallying, must  
Die several deaths for her brief one, and stretched  
Beyond the scope of sufferance ; wherefore here  
Choose out the man to put this peril on

725

And gird him with this glory ; let him pass  
Straight hence to court, and through all stays of  
state

Strike death into her heart.

*Bab.* Why, this rings right ;  
Well said, and soldierlike ; do thus, and take  
The vanguard of us all for honour.

*Sav.* Ay,  
Well would I go, but seeing no courtly suit  
Like yours, her servants and her pensioners,  
The doorkeepers will bid my baseness back  
From passage to her presence.

730

*Bab.* O, for that,  
Take this and buy ; nay, start not from your  
word ;  
You shall not.

735

*Sav.* Sir, I shall not.

*Bab.* Here's more gold ;  
Make haste, and God go with you ; if the plot  
Be blown on once of men's suspicious breath,



We are dead, and all die bootless deaths — be  
swift —

And her we have served we shall but surely slay. 740

I will make trial again of Walsingham

If he misdoubt us. O, my cloak and sword —

*Knocking within.*

I will go forth myself. What noise is that?

Get you to Gage's lodging; stay not here;

Makespeed without for Westminster; perchance 745

There may we safely shift our shapes and fly,

If the end be come upon us.

*Bal.*

It is here.

Death knocks at door already. Fly; farewell.

*Bab.* I would not leave you — but they know  
you not —

You need not fear, being found here singly.

*Bal.*

No. 750

*Bab.* Nay, halt not, sirs; no word but haste;  
this way,

Ere they break down the doors. God speed us  
well!

*Exeunt all but Ballard. As they go out,  
enter an Officer with Soldiers.*

*Officer.* Here's one fox yet by the foot; lay  
hold on him.

*Bal.* What would you, sirs?

*Off.* Why, make one foul bird fast,

Though the full flight be scattered: for their kind 755



*Mary Beaton.* How far from this to Tixall?

*Mary Stuart.* Nine or ten

Or what miles more I care not; we shall find 5

Fair field and goodly quarry, or he lies,

The gospeller that bade us to the sport,

Protesting yesternight the shire had none

To shame Sir Walter Aston's. God be praised,

I take such pleasure yet to back my steed 10

And bear my crossbow for a deer's death well,

I am almost half content — and yet I lie —

To ride no harder nor more dangerous heat

And hunt no beast of game less gallant.

*Mary Beaton.* Nay,

You grew long since more patient.

*Mary Stuart.* Ah, God help! 15

What should I do but learn the word of him

These years and years, the last word learnt but

one,

That ever I loved least of all sad words?

The last is death for any soul to learn,

The last save death is patience.

*Mary Beaton.* Time enough 20

We have had ere death of life to learn it in

Since you rode last on wilder ways than theirs

That drive the dun deer to his death.

*Mary Stuart.* Eighteen —

How many more years yet shall God mete out

For thee and me to wait upon their will 25

And hope or hope not, watch or sleep, and dream  
 Awake or sleeping? surely fewer, I think,  
 Than half these years that all have less of life  
 Than one of those more fleet that flew before.  
 I am yet some ten years younger than this queen, 30  
 Some nine or ten; but if I die this year  
 And she some score years longer than I think  
 Be royal-titled, in one year of mine  
 I shall have lived the longer life, and die  
 The fuller-fortuned woman. Dost thou mind 35  
 The letter that I writ nigh two years gone  
 To let her wit what privacies of hers  
 Our trusty dame of Shrewsbury's tongue made  
     mine  
 Ere it took fire to sting her lord and me?  
 How thick soe'er o'erscurfed with poisonous  
     lies, 40  
 Of her I am sure it lied not; and perchance  
 I did the wiselier, having writ my fill,  
 Yet to withhold the letter when she sought  
 Of me to know what villainies had it poured  
 In ears of mine against her innocent name: 45  
 And yet thou knowest what mirthful heart was  
     mine  
 To write her word of these, that had she read  
 Had surely, being but woman, made her mad,  
 Or haply, being not woman, had not. 'Faith,  
 How say'st thou? did I well?

*Mary Beaton.* Ay, surely well 50  
To keep that back you did not ill to write.

*Mary Stuart.* I think so, and again I think  
not; yet  
The best I did was bid thee burn it. She,  
That other Bess I mean of Hardwick, hath  
Mixed with her gall the fire at heart of hell, 55  
And all the mortal medicines of the world  
To drug her speech with poison; and God wot  
Her daughter's child here that I bred and loved,  
Bess Pierpoint, my sweet bedfellow that was,  
Keeps too much savour of her grandam's stock 60  
For me to match with Nau; my secretary  
Shall with no slip of hers engraft his own,  
Begetting shame or peril to us all  
From her false blood and fiery tongue; except  
I find a mate as meet to match with him 65  
For truth to me as Gilbert Curle hath found,  
I will play Tudor once and break the banns,  
Put on the feature of Elizabeth  
To frown their hands in sunder.

*Mary Beaton.* Were it not  
Some tyranny to take her likeness on 70  
And bitter-hearted grudge of matrimony  
For one and not his brother secretary,  
Forbid your Frenchman's banns for jealousy  
And grace your English with such liberal love  
As Barbara fails not yet to find of you 75

Since she writ Curle for Mowbray? and herein  
 There shows no touch of Tudor in your mood  
 More than its wont is; which indeed is nought;  
 The world, they say, for her should waste, ere  
 man

Should get her virginal goodwill to wed. 80

*Mary Stuart.* I would not be so tempered of  
 my blood,

So much mismade as she in spirit and flesh,  
 To be more fair of fortune. She should hate  
 Not me, albeit she hate me deadly, more  
 Than thee or any woman. By my faith, 85  
 Fain would I know, what knowing not of her  
 now

I muse upon and marvel, if she have  
 Desire or pulse or passion of true heart  
 Fed full from natural veins, or be indeed 90  
 All bare and barren all as dead men's bones  
 Of all sweet nature and sharp seed of love,  
 And those salt springs of life, through fire and  
 tears

That bring forth pain and pleasure in their kind  
 To make good days and evil, all in her  
 Lie sere and sapless as the dust of death. 95

I have found no great good hap in all my days  
 Nor much good cause to make me glad of God,  
 Yet have I had and lacked not of my life  
 My good things and mine evil: being not yet

Barred from life's natural ends of evil and good <sup>100</sup>  
 Foredoomed for man and woman through the  
                   world

Till all their works be nothing: and of mine  
 I know but this — though I should die to-day,  
 I would not take for mine her fortune.

*Mary Beaton.*

No?

Myself perchance I would not.

*Mary Stuart.*

Dost thou think <sup>105</sup>

That fire-tongued witch of Shrewsbury spake  
                   once truth

Who told me all those quaint foul merry tales  
 Of our dear sister that at her desire

I writ to give her word of, and at thine

Withheld and put the letter in thine hand <sup>110</sup>

To burn as was thy counsel? for my part,

How loud she lied soever in the charge

That for adultery taxed me with her lord

And being disproved before the council here

Brought on their knees to give themselves the lie <sup>115</sup>

Her and her sons by that first lord of four

That took in turn this hell-mouthed hag to wife

And got her kind upon her, yet in this

I do believe she lied not more than I

Reporting her by record, how she said <sup>120</sup>

What infinite times had Leicester and his queen

Plucked all the fruitless fruit of baffled love

That being contracted privily they might,

With what large gust of fierce and foiled desire  
This votaress crowned, whose vow could no  
man break, 125

Since God whose hand shuts up the unkindly  
womb

Had sealed it on her body, man by man  
Would course her kindless lovers, and in quest  
Pursue them hungering as a hound in heat,  
Full on the fiery scent and slot of lust, 130  
That men took shame and laughed and mar-  
velled; one,

Her chamberlain, so hotly would she trace  
And turn perforce from cover, that himself  
Being tracked at sight thus in the general eye  
Was even constrained to play the piteous hare 135  
And wind and double till her amorous chase  
Were blind with speed and breathless; but the  
worst

Was this, that for this country's sake and shame's  
Our huntress Dian could not be content  
With Hatton and another born her man 140  
And subject of this kingdom, but to heap  
The heavier scandal on her countrymen  
Had cast the wild growth of her lust away  
On one base-born, a stranger, whom of nights  
Within her woman's chamber would she seek 145  
To kiss and play for shame with secretly;  
And with the duke her bridegroom that should be,



That should and could not, seeing forsooth no  
man

Might make her wife or woman, had she dealt  
As with this knave his follower; for by night 150  
She met him coming at her chamber door

In her bare smock and night-rail, and thereon  
Bade him come in; who there abode three hours:  
But fools were they that thought to bind her will  
And stay with one man or allay the mood 155

That ranging still gave tongue on several heats  
To hunt fresh trails of lusty love; all this,  
Thou knowest, on record truly was set down,  
With much more villainous else: she prayed me  
write

That she might know the natural spirit and mind 160  
Toward her of this fell witch whose rancorous  
mouth

Then bayed my name, as now being great with  
child

By her fourth husband, in whose charge I lay  
As here in Paulet's; so being moved I wrote,  
And yet I would she had read it, though not now 165  
Would I re-write each word again, albeit

I might, or thou, were I so minded, or  
Thyself so moved to bear such witness; but  
'T is well we know not how she had borne to  
read

All this and more, what counsel gave the dame, 170

With loud excess of laughter urging me  
To enter on those lists of love-making  
My son for suitor to her, who thereby  
Might greatly serve and stead me in her sight ;  
And I replying that such a thing could be 175  
But held a very mockery, she returns,  
The queen was so infatuate and distraught  
With high conceit of her fair fretted face  
As of a heavenly goddess, that herself  
Would take it on her head with no great pains 180  
To bring her to believe it easily ;  
Being so past reason fain of flattering tongues  
She thought they mocked her not nor lied who  
said

They might not sometimes look her full in face  
For the light glittering from it as the sun ; 185  
And so perforce must all her women say  
And she herself that spake, who durst not look  
For fear to laugh out each in other's face  
Even while they fooled and fed her vein with  
words,

Nor let their eyes cross when they spake to her 190  
And set their feature fast as in a frame  
To keep grave countenance with gross mockery  
lined ;  
And how she prayed me chide her daughter,  
whom

She might by no means move to take this way,

And for her daughter Talbot was assured 195  
 She could not ever choose but laugh outright  
 Even in the good queen's flattered face. God wot,  
 Had she read all, and in my hand set down,  
 I could not blame her though she had sought to  
     take

My head for payment; no less poise on earth 200  
 Had served, and hardly, for the writer's fee;  
 I could not much have blamed her; all the less,  
 That I did take this, though from slanderous lips,  
 For gospel and not slander, and that now  
 I yet do well believe it.

*Mary Beaton.*                      And herself 205  
 Had well believed so much, and surely seen,  
 For all your protest of discredit made  
 With God to witness that you could not take  
 Such tales for truth of her nor would not, yet  
 You meant not she should take your word for  
     this, 210  
 As well I think she would not.

*Mary Stuart.*                      Haply, no.  
 We do protest not thus to be believed.  
 And yet the witch in one thing seven years  
     since  
 Belied her, saying she then must needs die soon  
 For timeless fault of nature. Now belike 215  
 The soothsaying that speaks short her span to be  
 May prove more true of presage.

*Mary Beaton.* Have you hope  
The chase to-day may serve our further ends  
Than to renew your spirit and bid time speed ?

*Mary Stuart.* I see not but I may ; the hour  
is full 220

Which I was bidden expect of them to bear  
More fruit than grows of promise ; Babington  
Should tarry now not long ; from France our  
friends

Lift up their heads to usward, and await  
What comfort may confirm them from our part 225  
Who sent us comfort ; Ballard's secret tongue  
Has kindled England, striking from men's hearts  
As from a flint the fire that slept, and made  
Their dark dumb thoughts and dim disfigured  
hopes

Take form from his and feature, aim and  
strength, 230

Speech and desire toward action ; all the shires  
Wherein the force lies hidden of our faith  
Are stirred and set on edge of present deed  
And hope more imminent now of help to come  
And work to do than ever ; not this time 235

We hang on trust in succour that comes short  
By Philip's fault from Austrian John, whose death  
Put widow's weeds on mine unwedded hope,  
Late trothplight to his enterprise in vain  
That was to set me free, but might not seal 240

The faith it pledged nor on the hand of hope  
Make fast the ring that weds desire with deed  
And promise with performance; Parma stands  
More fast now for us in his uncle's stead,  
Albeit the lesser warrior, yet in place 245  
More like to avail us, and in happier time  
To do like service; for my cousin of Guise,  
His hand and league hold fast our kinsman king,  
If not to bend and shape him for our use,  
Yet so to govern as he may not thwart 250  
Our forward undertaking till its force  
Discharge itself on England: from no side  
I see the shade of any fear to fail  
As those before so baffled; heart and hand  
Our hope is armed with trust more strong than  
steel 255  
And spirit to strike more helpful than a sword  
In hands that lack the spirit; and here to-day  
It may be I shall look this hope in the eyes  
And see her face transfigured. God is good  
He will not fail his faith for ever. O, 260  
That I were now in saddle! Yet an hour  
And I shall be as young again as May  
Whose life was come to August; like this year,  
I had grown past midway of my life, and sat  
Heartsick of summer; but new-mounted now 265  
I shall ride right through shine and shade of  
spring



From all devices past of policy 290

To join my name with my misnated son's

In handfast pledge with England's, ere my foes

His counsellors had flawed his craven faith

And moved my natural blood to cast me off

Who bore him in my body, to come forth 295

Less childlike than a changeling. But not long

Shall they find means by him to work their

will,

Nor he bear head against me ; hope was his

To reign forsooth without my fellowship,

And he that with me would not shall not now 300

Without or with me wield not or divide

Or part or all of empire.

*Mary Beaton.*

Dear my queen,

Vex not your mood with sudden change of

thoughts ;

Your mind but now was merrier than the sun

Half rid by this through morning : we by noon 305

Should blithely mount and meet him.

*Mary Stuart.*

So I said.

My spirit is fallen again from that glad strength

Which even but now arrayed it ; yet what cause

Should dull the dancing measure in my blood

For doubt or wrath, I know not. Being once

forth,

310

My heart again will quicken.

*Sings.*

And ye maun braid your yellow hair  
 And busk ye like a bride ;  
 Wi' sevenscore men to bring ye hame,  
 And ae true love beside ; 315  
 Between the birk and the green rowan  
 Fu' blithely shall ye ride.

O ye maun braid my yellow hair,  
 But braid it like nae bride ;  
 And I maun gang my ways, mither, 320  
 Wi' nae true love beside ;  
 Between the kirk and the kirkyard  
 Fu' sadly shall I ride.

How long since,  
 How long since was it last I heard or sang  
 Such light lost ends of old faint rhyme worn thin 325  
 With use of country songsters ? When we twain  
 Were maidens but some twice a span's length  
 high,  
 Thou hadst the happier memory to hold rhyme,  
 But not for songs the merrier.

*Mary Beaton.* This was one  
 That I would sing after my nurse, I think, 330  
 And weep upon in France at six years old  
 To think of Scotland.

*Mary Stuart.* Would I weep for that,  
 Woman or child, I have had now years enough  
 To weep in ; thou wast never French in heart,  
 Serving the queen of France. Poor queen that  
 was,



Poor boy that played her bridegroom ! now they  
seem

In these mine eyes that were her eyes as far  
Beyond the reach and range of oldworld time  
As their first fathers' graves.

*Enter Sir Amyas Paulet.*

*Paulet.* Madam, if now  
It please you to set forth, the hour is full, 340  
And there your horses ready.

*Mart Stuart.* Sir, my thanks.  
We are bounden to you and this goodly day  
For no small comfort. Is it your will we ride  
Accompanied with any for the nonce  
Of our own household ?

*Paul.* If you will, to-day 345  
Your secretaries have leave to ride with you.

*Mary Stuart.* We keep some state then yet. I  
pray you, sir,  
Doth he wait on you that came here last month,  
A low-built lank-cheeked Judas-bearded man,  
Lean, supple, grave, pock-pitten, yellow-polled, 350  
A smiling fellow with a downcast eye ?

*Paul.* Madam, I know the man for none of  
mine.

*Mary Stuart.* I give you joy as you should  
give God thanks,  
Sir, if I err not ; but meseemed this man  
Found gracious entertainment here, and took 355

Such counsel with you as I surely thought  
 Spake him your friend, and honourable ; but now  
 If I misread not an ambiguous word  
 It seems you know no more of him or less  
 Than Peter did, being questioned, of his Lord. 360

*Paul.* I know not where the cause were to be  
 sought

That might for likeness or unlikeness found  
 Make seemly way for such comparison  
 As turns such names to jest and bitterness ;  
 Howbeit, as I denied not nor disclaimed 365  
 To know the man you speak of, yet I may  
 With very purity of truth profess  
 The man to be not of my following.

*Mary Stuart.*

See

How lightly may the tongue that thinks no ill  
 Or trip or slip, discoursing that or this 370  
 With grave good men in purity and truth,  
 And come to shame even with a word ! God  
 wot,

We had need put bit and bridle in our lips  
 Ere they take on them of their foolishness  
 To change wise words with wisdom. Come, 375  
 sweet friend,

Let us go seek our kind with horse and hound  
 To keep us witless company ; belike,  
 There shall we find our fellows.

*Exeunt Mary Stuart and Mary Beaton.*

*Paul.* Would to God  
This day had done its office ! mine till then  
Holds me the verier prisoner.

*Enter Phillipps.*

*Phillipps.* She will go ? 380

*Paul.* Gladly, poor sinful fool ; more gladly,  
sir,  
Than I go with her.

*Phill.* Yet you go not far  
She is come too near her end of wayfaring  
To tire much more men's feet that follow.

*Paul.* Ay.  
She walks but half blind yet to the end ; even now 385  
She spake of you, and questioned doubtfully  
What here you came to do, or held what place  
Or commerce with me : when you caught her  
eye,

It seems your courtesy by some graceless chance  
Found but scant grace with her.

*Phill.* 'T is mine own blame, 390  
Or fault of mine own feature ; yet forsooth  
I greatly covet not their gracious hap  
Who have found or find most grace with her. I  
pray,

Doth Wade go with you ?

*Paul.* Nay, — what, know you not ? —  
But with Sir Thomas Gorges, from the court, 395  
To drive this deer at Tixall.

*Phill.* Two years since,  
He went, I think, commissioned from the queen  
To treat with her at Sheffield?

*Paul.* Ay, and since  
She hath not seen him; who being known of  
here

Had haply given her swift suspicion edge 400  
Or cause at least of wonder.

*Phill.* And I doubt  
His last year's entertainment oversea  
As our queen's envoy to demand of France  
Her traitor Morgan's body, whence he brought  
Nought save dry blows back from the duke 405  
d'Aumale

And for that prisoner's quarters here to hang  
His own not whole but beaten, should not much  
Incline him to more good regard of her  
For whose love's sake her friends have dealt with  
him

So honourably, nor she that knows of this 410  
Be the less like to take his presence here  
For no good presage to her: you have both done  
well

To keep his hand as close herein as mine.

*Paul.* Sir, by my faith I know not, for myself,  
What part is for mine honour, or wherein 415  
Of all this action laid upon mine hand  
The name and witness of a gentleman

May gain desert or credit, and increase  
In seed and harvest of good men's esteem  
For heritage to his heirs, that men unborn 420  
Whose fame is as their name derived from his  
May reap in reputation; and indeed  
I look for none advancement in the world  
Further than this that yet for no man's sake  
Would I forego, to keep the name I have 425  
And honour, which no son of mine shall say  
I have left him not for any deed of mine  
As perfect as my sire bequeathed it me:  
I say, for any word or work yet past  
No tongue can thus far tax me of decline 430  
From that fair forthright way of gentleman,  
Nor shall for any that I think to do  
Or aught I think to say alive: howbeit,  
I were much bounden to the man would say  
But so much for me in our mistress' ear, 435  
The treasurer's, or your master Walsingham's,  
Whose office here I have undergone thus long  
And had I leave more gladly would put off  
Than ever I put on me; being not one  
That out of love toward England even or God 440  
At mightiest men's desire would lightly be  
For loyalty disloyal, or approved  
In trustless works a trusty traitor; this  
He that should tell them of me, to procure  
The speedier end here of this work imposed, 445

Should bind me to him more heartily than thanks  
Might answer.

*Phill.* Good Sir Amyas, you and I  
Hold no such office in this dangerous time  
As men make love to for their own name's sake  
Or personal lust of honour; but herein 450  
I pray you yet take note, and pardon me  
If I for the instance mix your name with mine,  
That no man's private honour lies at gage,  
Nor is the stake set here to play for less  
Than what is more than all men's names alive, 455  
The great life's gage of England; in whose  
name  
Lie all our own impledged, as all our lives  
For her redemption forfeit, if the cause  
Call once upon us; not this gift or this,  
Or what best likes us or were gladliest given 460  
Or might most honourably be parted with  
For our more credit on her best behalf,  
Doth she we serve, this land that made us men,  
Require of all her children; but demands  
Of our great duty toward her full deserts 465  
Even all we have of honour or of life,  
Of breath or fame to give her. What were I  
Or what were you, being mean or nobly born,  
Yet moulded both of one land's natural womb  
And fashioned out of England, to deny 470  
What gift she crave soever, choose and grudge

What grace we list to give or what withhold,  
 Refuse and reckon with her when she bids  
 Yield up forsooth not life but fame to come,  
 A good man's praise or gentleman's repute, 475  
 Or lineal pride of children, and the light  
 Of loyalty remembered? which of these  
 Were worth our mother's death, or shame that  
                   might

Fall for one hour on England? She must live  
 And keep in all men's sight her honour fast 480  
 Though all we die dishonoured; and myself  
 Know not nor seek of men's report to know  
 If what I do to serve her till I die  
 Be honourable or shameful, and its end  
 Good in men's eyes or evil; but for God, 485  
 I find not why the name or fear of him  
 Herein should make me swerve or start aside  
 Through faint heart's falsehood as a broken  
                   bow

Snapped in his hand that bent it, ere the shaft  
 Find out his enemies' heart, and I that end 490  
 Whereto I am sped for service even of him  
 Who put this office on us.

*Paul.*

Truly, sir,

I lack the wordy wit to match with yours,  
 Who speak no more than soldier; this I know,  
 I am sick in spirit and heart to have in hand 495  
 Such work or such device of yours as yet

For fear and conscience of what worst may come  
I dare not well bear through.

*Phill.* Why, so last month  
You writ my master word and me to boot  
I had set you down a course for many things 500  
You durst not put in execution, nor  
Consign the packet to this lady's hand  
That was returned from mine, seeing all was  
well,  
And you should hold yourself most wretched  
man

If by your mean or order there should spring 505  
Suspicion 'twixt the several messengers  
Whose hands unwitting each of other ply  
The same close trade for the same golden end,  
While either holds his mate a faithful fool  
And all their souls, baseborn or gently bred, 510  
Are coined and stamped and minted for our use  
And current in our service; I thereon  
To assuage your doubt and fortify your fear  
Was posted hither, where by craft and pains  
The web is wound up of our enterprise 515  
And in our hands we hold her very heart  
As fast as all this while we held impawned  
The faith of Barnes that stood for Gifford here  
To take what letters for his mistress came  
From southward through the ambassador of  
France 520



And bear them to the brewer, your honest man,  
Who wist no further of his fellowship  
Than he of Gifford's, being as simple knaves  
As knavish each in his simplicity,  
And either serviceable alike, to shift 525  
Between my master's hands and yours and mine  
Her letters writ and answered to and fro ;  
And all these faiths as weathertight and safe  
As was the box that held those letters close  
At bottom of the barrel, to give up 530  
The charge there sealed and ciphered, and re-  
ceive

A charge as great in peril and in price  
To yield again, when they drew off the beer  
That weekly served this lady's household whom  
We have drained as dry of secrets drugged with  
death 535

As ever they this vessel, and return  
To her own lips the dregs she brewed or we  
For her to drink have tempered. What of this  
Should seem so strange now to you, or distaste  
So much the daintier palate of your thoughts, 540  
That I should need reiterate you by word  
The work of us o'erpast, or fill your ear  
With long foregone recital, that at last  
Your soul may start not or your sense recoil  
To know what end we are come to, or what  
hope 545



Found false or feared by this, whom first you  
found

A trustier thief and worthier of his wage 570  
Than I, poor man, had wit to find him? I,  
That trust no changelings of the church of hell,  
No babes reared priestlike at the paps of Rome  
Who have left the old harlot's deadly dugs  
drawn dry,

I lacked the craft to rate this knave of price, 575  
Your smock-faced Gifford, at his worth aright,  
Which now comes short of promise.

*Phill.*

O, not he;

Let not your knighthood for a slippery word  
So much misdoubt his knaveship; here from  
France,

On hint of our suspicion in his ear 580  
Half jestingly recorded, that his hand  
Were set against us in one politic track  
With his old yoke-fellows in craft and creed,  
Betraying not them to us but ourselves to them,  
My Gilbert writes me with such heat of hand 585  
Such piteous protestation of his faith  
So stuffed and swoln with burly-bellied oaths  
And God and Christ confound him if he lie  
And Jesus save him as he speaks mere truth,  
My gracious godly priestling, that yourself 590  
Must sure be moved to take his truth on trust  
Or stand for him approved an atheist.

*Paul.* Well,  
 That you find stuff of laughter in such gear  
 And mirth to make out of the godless mouth  
 Of such a twice-turned villain, for my part 595  
 I take in token of your certain trust,  
 And make therewith mine own assurance sure,  
 To see betimes an end of all such craft  
 As takes the faith forsworn of loud-tongued liars  
 And blasphemies of brothel-breathing knaves 600  
 To build its hope or break its jest upon ;  
 And so commend you to your charge, and take  
 Mine own on me less gladly ; for by this  
 She should be girt to ride, as the old saw saith,  
 Out of God's blessing into the warm sun 605  
 And out of the warm sun into the pit  
 That men have dug before her, as herself  
 Had dug for England else a deeper grave  
 To hide our hope for ever : yet I would  
 This day and all that hang on it were done. 610  
*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. — *Before Tixall Park.*

*Mary Stuart, Mary Beaton, Paulet, Curle, Nau, and Attendants.*

*Mary Stuart.* If I should never more back  
 steed alive  
 But now had ridden hither this fair day  
 The last road ever I must ride on earth,

Yet would I praise it, saying of all days gone  
And all roads ridden in sight of stars and sun 5  
Since first I sprang to saddle, here at last  
I had found no joyless end. These ways are  
smooth,

And all this land's face merry; yet I find  
The ways even therefore not so good to ride,  
And all the land's face therefore less worth love, 10  
Being smoother for a palfrey's maiden pace  
And merrier than our moors for outlook; nay,  
I lie to say so; there the wind and sun  
Make madder mirth by midsummer, and fill  
With broader breath and lustier length of light 15  
The heartier hours that clothe for even and dawn  
Our bosom-belted billowy-blossoming hills  
Whose hearts break out in laughter like the sea  
For miles of heaving heather. Ye should mock  
My banished praise of Scotland; and in faith 20  
I praised it but to prick you on to praise  
Of your own goodly land; though field and wood  
Be parked and parcelled to the sky's edge out,  
And this green Stafford moorland smooth and  
strait

That we but now rode over, and by ours 25  
Look pale for lack of large live mountain bloom  
Wind-buffed with morning, it should be  
Worth praise of men whose lineal honour lives  
In keeping here of history: but meseems

I have heard, Sir Amyas, of your liberal west 30  
 As of a land more affluent-souled than this  
 And fruitful-hearted as the south-wind; here  
 I find a fair-faced change of temperate clime  
 From that bald hill-brow in a broad bare plain  
 Where winter laid us both his prisoners late 35  
 Fast by the feet at Tutbury; but men say  
 Your birthright in this land is fallen more fair  
 In goodlier ground of heritage: perchance,  
 Grief to be now barred thence by mean of me,  
 Who less than you can help it or myself, 40  
 Makes you ride sad and sullen.

*Paulet.* Madam, no;

I pray you lay not to my wilful charge  
 The blame or burden of discourtesy  
 That but the time should bear which lays on me  
 This weight of thoughts untimely.

*Mary Stuart.* Nay, fair sir, 45

If I, that have no cause in life to seem  
 Glad of my sad life more than prisoners may,  
 Take comfort yet of sunshine, he methinks  
 That holds in ward my days and nights might  
 well  
 Take no less pleasure of this broad blithe air 50  
 Than his poor charge that too much troubles  
 him.

What, are we nigh the chase?

*Paul.* Even hard at hand.

*Mary Stuart.* Can I not see between the glittering leaves  
Gleam the dun hides and flash the startled horns  
That we must charge and scatter? Were I  
queen

55

And had a crown to wager on my hand,  
Sir, I would set it on the chance to-day  
To shoot a flight beyond you.

*Paul.* Verily,  
The hazard were too heavy for my skill :  
I would not hold your wager.

*Mary Stuart.* No! and why? 60

*Paul.* For fear to come a bowshot short of you  
On the left hand, unluckily.

*Mary Stuart.* My friend,  
Our keeper's wit-shaft is too keen for ours  
To match its edge with pointless iron.— Sir,  
Your tongue shoots further than my hand or  
eye

65

With sense or aim can follow.— Gilbert Curle,  
Your heart yet halts behind this cry of hounds,  
Hunting your own deer's trail at home, who lies  
Now close in covert till her bearing-time  
Be full to bring forth kindly fruit of kind

70

To love that yet lacks issue ; and in sooth  
I blame you not to bid all sport go by  
For one white doe's sake travailing, who myself  
Think long till I may take within mine arm

The soft fawn suckling that is yeaned not yet 75  
 But is to make her mother. We must hold  
 A goodly christening feast with prisoner's cheer  
 And mirth enow for such a tender thing  
 As will not weep more to be born in bonds  
 Than babes born out of gaoler's ward, nor  
 grudge 80

To find no friend more fortunate than I  
 Nor happier hand to welcome it, nor name  
 More prosperous than poor mine to wear, if God  
 Shall send the new-made mother's breast, for  
 love

Of us that love his mother's maidenhood, 85  
 A maid to be my namechild, and in all  
 Save love to them that love her, by God's grace,  
 Most unlike me; for whose unborn sweet sake  
 Pray you meantime be merry. — 'Faith, methinks  
 Here be more huntsmen out afield to-day 90  
 And merrier than my guardian. Sir, look up;  
 What think you of these riders? — All my friends,  
 Make on to meet them.

*Paul.* There shall need no haste;  
 They ride not slack or lamely.

*Mary Stuart.* Now, fair sir,  
 What say you to my chance on wager? here 95  
 I think to outshoot your archery. — By my  
 life,

That too must fail if hope now fail me; these



That ride so far off yet, being come, shall bring  
Death or deliverance. Prithee, speak but once;

*Aside to Mary Beaton.*

Say, these are they we looked for; say, thou too <sup>100</sup>  
Hadst hope to meet them; say, they should be  
here,

And I did well to look for them; O God!  
Say but I was not mad to hope; see there;  
Speak, or I die.

*Mary Beaton.* Nay, not before they come.

*Mary Stuart.* Dost thou not hear my heart?  
it speaks so loud 105

I can hear nothing of them. Yet I will not  
Fail in mine enemy's sight. This is mine hour  
That was to be for triumph; God, I pray,  
Stretch not its length out longer!

*Mary Beaton.* It is past.

*Enter Sir Thomas Gorges, Sir William Wade, and  
Soldiers.*

*Mary Stuart.* What man is this that stands  
across our way? 110

*Gorges.* One that hath warrant, madam, from  
the queen

To arrest your French and English secretary  
And for more surety see yourself removed  
To present ward at Tixall here hard by,  
As in this paper stands of her subscribed. 115

Lay hands on them.

*Mary Stuart.* Was this your riddle's word ?

*To Paulet.*

You have shot beyond me indeed, and shot to  
death

Your honour with my life. — Draw, sirs, and  
stand ;

Ye have swords yet left to strike with once, and  
die

By these our foes are girt with. Some good  
friend — 120

I should have one yet left of you — take heart  
And slay me here. For God's love, draw ; they  
have not

So large a vantage of us we must needs  
Bear back one foot from peril. Give not way ;  
Ye shall but die more shamefully than here 125

Who can but here die fighting. What, no man ?  
Must I find never at my need alive

A man with heart to help me ? O, my God,  
Let me die now and foil them ! Paulet, you,  
Most knightly liar and traitor, was not this 130

Part of your charge, to play my hangman too,  
Who have played so well my doomsman, and  
betrayed

So honourably my trust, so bravely set  
A snare so loyal to make sure for death  
So poor a foolish woman ? Sir, or you 135

That have this gallant office, great as his,

To do the deadliest errand and most vile  
That even your mistress ever laid on man  
And sent her basest knave to bear and slay,  
You are likewise of her chivalry, and should not 140  
Shrink to fulfil your title ; being a knight,  
For her dear sake that made you, lose not heart  
To strike for her one worthy stroke, that may  
Rid me defenceless of the loathed long life  
She gapes for like a bloodhound. Nay, I find 145  
A face beside you that should bear for me  
Not life inscribed upon it ; two years since  
I read therein at Sheffield what goodwill  
She bare toward me that sent to treat withal  
So mean a man and shameless, by his tongue 150  
To smite mine honour on the face, and turn  
My name of queen to servant ; by his hand  
So let her turn my life's name now to death,  
Which I would take more thankfully than shame  
To plead and thus prevail not.

*Paul.* Madam, no, 155  
With us you may not in such suit prevail  
Nor we by words or wrath of yours be moved  
To turn their edge back on you, nor remit  
The least part of our office, which deserves  
Nor scorn of you nor wonder, whose own act 160  
Has laid it on us ; wherefore with less rage  
Please you take thought now to submit yourself,  
Even for your own more honour, to the effect

Whose cause was of your own device, that here  
 Bears fruit unlooked for; which being ripe in time 165  
 You cannot choose but taste of, nor may we  
 But do the season's bidding, and the queen's  
 Who weeps at heart to know it. — Disarm these  
 men;

Take you the prisoners to your present ward  
 And hence again to London; here meanwhile 170  
 Some week or twain their lady must lie close  
 And with a patient or impatient heart  
 Expect an end and word of judgment: I  
 Must with Sir William back to Chartley straight  
 And there make inquisition ere day close 175  
 What secret serpents of what treasons hatched  
 May in this lady's papers lurk, whence we  
 Must pluck the fangs forth of them yet unfleshed,  
 And lay these plots like dead and strangled snakes  
 Naked before the council.

*Mary Stuart.* I must go? 180

*Gorges.* Madam, no help; I pray your pardon.

*Mary Stuart.* Ay?

Had I your pardon in this hand to give,  
 And here in this my vengeance — Words, and  
 words!

God, for thy pity! what vile thing is this  
 That thou didst make of woman? even in death, 185  
 As in the extremest evil of all our lives,  
 We can but curse or pray, but prate and weep,

And all our wrath is wind that works no wreck,  
And all our fire as water. Noble sirs,  
We are servants of your servants, and obey 190  
The beck of your least groom; obsequiously,  
We pray you but report of us so much,  
Submit us to you. Yet would I take farewell,  
May it not displease you, for old service' sake,  
Of one my servant here that was, and now 195  
Hath no word for me; yet I blame him not,  
Who am past all help of man; God witness me,  
I would not chide now, Gilbert, though my  
tongue

Had strength yet left for chiding, and its edge  
Were yet a sword to smite with, or my wrath 200  
A thing that babes might shrink at; only this  
Take with you for your poor queen's true last  
word,

That if they let me live so long to see  
The fair wife's face again from whose soft side,  
Now labouring with your child, by violent hands 205  
You are reft perforce for my sake, while I live  
I will have charge of her more carefully  
Than of mine own life's keeping, which indeed  
I think not long to keep, nor care, God knows,  
How soon or how men take it. Nay, good friend, 210  
Weep not; my weeping time is wellnigh past,  
And theirs whose eyes have too much wept for  
me

Should last no longer. Sirs, I give you thanks  
For thus much grace and patience shown of you,  
My gentle gaolers, towards a queen unqueened 215  
Who shall nor get nor crave again of man  
What grace may rest in him to give her.

Come,

Bring me to bonds again, and her with me  
That hath not stood so nigh me all these years  
To fall ere life doth from my side, or take 220  
Her way to death without me till I die.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II  
WALSINGHAM





## ACT II.

SCENE I. — *Windsor Castle.*

*Queen Elizabeth and Sir Francis Walsingham.*

*Elizabeth.* What will ye make me? Let the  
council know

I am yet their loving mistress, but they lay  
Too strange a burden on my love who send  
As to their servant word what ways to take,  
What sentence of my subjects given subscribe 5  
And in mine own name utter. Bid them wait;  
Have I not patience? and was never quick  
To teach my tongue the deadly word of death,  
Lest one day strange tongues blot my fame with  
blood;

The red addition of my sister's name 10  
Shall brand not mine.

*Walsingham.* God grant your mercy shown  
Mark not your memory like a martyr's red  
With pure imperial heart's-blood of your own  
Shed through your own sweet-spirited height of  
heart

That held your hand from justice.

*Eliz.* I would rather 15  
Stand in God's sight so signed with mine own  
blood

Than with a sister's — innocent ; or indeed  
 Though guilty — being a sister's — might I  
                   choose,

As being a queen I may not surely — no —  
 I may not choose, you tell me.

*Wal.*

Nay, no man 20

Hath license of so large election given  
 As once to choose, being servant called of  
                   God,

If he will serve or no, or save the name  
 And slack the service.

*Eliz.*

Yea, but in his Word

I find no word that whets for king-killing 25  
 The sword kings bear for justice ; yet I doubt,  
 Being drawn, it may not choose but strike at  
                   root —

Being drawn to cut off treason. Walsingham,  
 You are more a statesman than a gospeller ;  
 Take for your tongue's text now no text of  
                   God's, 30

But what the devil has put into their lips  
 Who should have slain me ; nay, what by God's  
                   grace,  
 Who bared their purpose to us, through pain or  
                   fear

Hath been wrung thence of secrets writ in fire  
 At bottom of their hearts. Have they confessed ? 35

*Wal.* The twain trapped first in London.

*Eliz.* What, the priest ?  
Their twice-turned Ballard, ha ?

*Wal.* Madam, not he.

*Eliz.* God's blood ! ye have spared not him  
the torment, knaves ?  
Of all I would not spare him.

*Wal.* Verily, no ;  
The rack hath spun his life's thread out so fine 40  
There is but left for death to slit in twain  
The thickness of a spider's.

*Eliz.* Ay, still dumb ?

*Wal.* Dumb for all good the pains can get of  
him ;  
Had he drunk dry the chalice of his craft  
Brewed in design abhorred of even his friends 45  
With poisonous purpose toward your majesty,  
He had kept scarce harder silence.

*Eliz.* Poison ? ay —  
That should be still the churchman's household  
sword  
Or saintly staff to bruise crowned heads from far  
And break them with his precious balms that  
smell 50

Rank as the jaws of death, or festal fume  
When Rome yet reeked with Borgia ; but the rest  
Had grace enow to grant me for goodwill  
Some death more gracious than a rat's ? God  
wot,

I am bounden to them, and will charge for this 55  
 The hangman thank them heartily; they shall  
                   not

Lack daylight means to die by. God, meseems,  
 Will have me not die darkling like a dog,  
 Who hath kept my lips from poison and my  
                   heart

From shot of English knave or Spanish, both 60  
 Dubbed of the devil or damned his doctors,  
                   whom

My riddance from all ills that plague man's life  
 Should have made great in record; and for wage  
 Your Ballard hath not better hap to fee  
 Than Lopez had or Parry. Well, he lies 65  
 As dumb in bonds as those dead dogs in earth,  
 You say, but of his fellows newly ta'en  
 There are that keep not silence: what say these?  
 Pour in mine ears the poison of their plot  
 Whose fangs have stung the silly snakes to death. 70

*Wal.* The first a soldier, Savage, in these  
                   wars

That sometime serving sought a traitor's luck  
 Under the prince Farnese, then of late  
 At Rheims was tempted of our traitors there,  
 Of one in chief, Gifford the seminarist, 75  
 My smock-faced spy's good uncle, to take off  
 Or the earl of Leicester or your gracious self;  
 And since his passage hither, to confirm

His hollow-hearted hardihood, hath had  
 Word from this doctor more solicitous yet 80  
 Sent by my knave his nephew, who of late  
 Was in the seminary of so deadly seed  
 Their reader in philosophy, that their head,  
 Even Cardinal Allen, holds for just and good  
 The purpose laid upon his hand; this man 85  
 Makes yet more large confession than of this,  
 Saying from our Gilbert's trusty mouth he had  
 Assurance that in Italy the Pope  
 Hath levies raised against us, to set forth  
 For seeming succour toward the Parmesan, 90  
 But in their actual aim bent hither, where  
 With French and Spaniards in one front of war  
 They might make in upon us; but from France  
 No foot shall pass for inroad on our peace  
 Till — so they phrase it — by these Catholics here 95  
 Your majesty be taken, or —

*Eliz.*

No more —

But only taken? sprunged but bird-like? Ha!  
 They are something tender of our poor personal  
 chance —

Temperately tender: yet I doubt the springe  
 Had haply maimed me no less deep than life 100  
 Sits next the heart most mortal. Or — so be it  
 I slip the springe — what yet may shackle France,  
 Hang weights upon their purpose who should else  
 Be great of heart against us? They take time

Till I be taken — or till what signal else 105  
As favourable?

*Wal.* Till she they serve be brought  
Safe out of Paulet's keeping.

*Eliz.* Ay? they know him  
So much my servant, and his guard so good,  
That sound of strange feet marching on our soil  
Against us in his prisoner's name perchance 110  
Might from the walls wherein she sits his guest  
Raise a funeral echo? Yet I think  
He would not dare — what think'st thou might he  
dare

Without my word for warrant? If I knew  
This—

*Wal.* It should profit not your grace to know 115  
What may not be conceivable for truth  
Without some stain on honour.

*Eliz.* Nay, I say not  
That I would have him take upon his hand  
More than his trust may warrant: yet have men,  
Good men, for very truth of their good hearts 120  
Put loyal hand to work as perilous — well,  
God wot I would not have him so transgress —  
If such be called transgressors.

*Wal.* Let the queen  
Rest well assured he shall not. So far forth  
Our swordsman Savage witnesses of these 125  
That moved him toward your murder but in trust

Thereby to bring invasion over sea :  
 Which one more gently natured of his birth,  
 Tichborne, protests with very show of truth  
 That he would give no ear to, knowing, he saith, 130  
 The miseries of such conquest : nor, it seems,  
 Heard this man aught of murderous purpose bent  
 Against your highness.

*Eliz.* Naught ? why then, again,  
 To him I am yet more bounden, who may think,  
 Being found but half my traitor, at my hands 135  
 To find but half a hangman.

*Wal.* Nay, the man  
 Herein seems all but half his own man, being  
 Made merely out of stranger hearts and brains  
 Their engine of conspiracy ; for thus  
 Forsooth he pleads, that Babington his friend 140  
 First showed him how himself was wrought upon  
 By one man's counsel and persuasion, one  
 Held of great judgment, Ballard, on whose head  
 All these lay all their forfeit.

*Eliz.* Yet shall each  
 Pay for himself red coin of ransom down 145  
 In costlier drops than gold is. But of these  
 Why take we thought ? their natural-subject  
 blood

Can wash not out their sanguine-sealed attempt,  
 Nor leave us marked as tyrant : only she  
 That is the head and heart of all your fears 150

Whose hope or fear is England's, quick or dead,  
 Leaves or imperilled or impeached of blood  
 Me that with all but hazard of mine own,  
 God knows, would yet redeem her. I will write  
 With mine own hand to her privily, — what  
 else? —

155

Saying, if by word as privy from her hand  
 She will confess her treasonous practices,  
 They shall be wrapped in silence up, and she  
 By judgment live unscathed.

*Wal.* Being that she is,  
 So surely will she deem of your great grace, 160  
 And see it but as a snare set wide, or net  
 Spread in the bird's sight vainly.

*Eliz.* Why, then, well:  
 She, casting off my grace, from all men's grace  
 Cuts off herself, and even aloud avows  
 By silence and suspect of jealous heart 165  
 Her manifest foul conscience: on which proof  
 I will proclaim her to the parliament  
 So self-convicted. Yet I would not have  
 Her name and life by mortal evidence  
 Touched at the trial of them that now shall die 170  
 Or by their charge attainted: lest myself  
 Fall in more peril of her friends than she  
 Stands yet in shot of judgment.

*Wal.* Be assured,  
 Madam, the process of their treasons judged



Shall tax not her before her trial-time 175  
 With public note of clear complicity  
 Even for that danger's sake which moves you.

*Eliz.* Me

So much it moves not for my mere life's sake  
 Which I would never buy with fear of death  
 As for the general danger's and the shame's 180  
 Thence cast on queenship and on womanhood  
 By means of such a murderess. But, for them,  
 I would the merited manner of their death  
 Might for more note of terror be referred  
 To me and to my council : these at least 185  
 Shall hang for warning in the world's wide eye  
 More high than common traitors, with more  
 pains  
 Being ravished forth of their more villainous  
 lives

Than feed the general throat of justice. Her  
 Shall this too touch, whom none that serves  
 henceforth 190

But shall be sure of hire more terrible  
 Than all past wage of treason.

*Wal.* Why, so far

As law gives leave —

*Eliz.* What prat'st thou me of law?  
 God's blood ! is law for man's sake made, or  
 man

For law's sake only, to be held in bonds, 195

Led lovingly like hound in huntsman's leash  
 Or child by finger, not for help or stay,  
 But hurt and hindrance? Is not all this land  
 And all its hope and surety given to time  
 Of sovereignty and freedom, all the fame 200  
 And all the fruit of manhood hence to be,  
 More than one rag or relic of its law  
 Wherewith all these lie shackled? as too sure  
 Have states no less than ours been done to death  
 With gentle counsel and soft-handed rule 205  
 For fear to snap one thread of ordinance  
 Though thence the state were strangled.

*Wal.* Madam, yet  
 There need no need be here of law's least  
 breach,

That of all else is worst necessity —  
 Being such a mortal medicine to the state 210  
 As poison drunk to expel a feverish taint  
 Which air or sleep might purge as easily.

*Eliz.* Ay, but if air be poison-struck with  
 plague  
 Or sleep to death lie palsied, fools were they,  
 Faint hearts and faithless, who for health's fair  
 sake 215  
 Should fear to cleanse air, pierce and probe the  
 trance,  
 With purging fire or iron. Have your way.  
 God send good end of all this, and procure

Some mean whereby mine enemies' craft and his  
 May take no feet but theirs in their own toils, <sup>220</sup>  
 And no blood shed be innocent as mine.

SCENE II. — *Chartley.*

*Mary Beaton and Sir Amyas Paulet.*

*Paulet.* You should do well to bid her less be  
 moved

Who needs fear less of evil. Since we came  
 Again from Tixall this wild mood of hers  
 Hath vexed her more than all men's enmities  
 Should move a heart more constant. Verily, <sup>5</sup>  
 I thought she had held more rule upon herself  
 Than to call out on beggars at the gate  
 When she rode forth, crying she had nought to  
 give,  
 Being all as much a beggar too as they,  
 With all things taken from her.

*Mary Beaton.* Being so served, <sup>10</sup>  
 In sooth she should not show nor shame nor  
 spleen :

It was but seventeen days ye held her there  
 Away from all attendance, as in bonds  
 Kept without change of raiment, and to find,  
 Being thence haled hither again, no nobler use, <sup>15</sup>  
 But all her papers plundered — then her keys  
 By force of violent threat wrung from the hand



*Paul.*

Speak 40

More short and plainly : what I well may grant  
Shall so seem easiest granted.

*Mary Beaton.*

There should be

No cause I think to seal your lips up, though  
I crave of them but so much breath as may  
Give mine ear knowledge of the witness borne 45  
(If aught of witness were against her borne)  
By those her secretaries you spake of.

*Paul.*

This

With hard expostulation was drawn forth  
At last of one and other, that they twain  
Had writ by record from their lady's mouth 50  
To Babington some letter which implies  
Close conscience of his treason, and goodwill  
To meet his service with complicity :  
But one thing found therein of deadliest note  
The Frenchman swore they set not down, nor she 55  
Bade write one word of favour nor assent  
Answering this murderous motion toward our  
queen :

Only, saith he, she held herself not bound  
For love's sake to reveal it, and thereby  
For love of enemies do to death such friends 60  
As only for her own love's sake were found  
Fit men for murderous treason : and so much  
Her own hand's transcript of the word she sent  
Should once produced bear witness of her.

*Mary Beaton.*

Ay?

How then came this withholden?

*Paul.*

If she speak 65

But truth, why, truth should sure be manifest,  
And shall, with God's good will, to good men's  
joy

That wish not evil: as at Fotheringay

When she shall come to trial must be tried

If it be truth or no: for which assay

70

You shall do toward her well and faithfully

To bid her presently prepare her soul

That it may there make answer.

*Mary Beaton.*

Presently?

*Paul.* Upon the arraignment of her friends  
who stand

As 't were at point of execution now

75

Ere sentence pass upon them of their sin.

Would you no more with me?

*Mary Beaton.*

I am bounden to you

For thus much tidings granted.

*Paul.*

So farewell. *Exit.*

*Mary Beaton.* So fare I well or ill as one who  
knows

He shall not fare much further toward his end. 80

Here looms on me the landmark of my life

That I have looked for now some score of years

Even with long-suffering eagerness of heart

And a most hungry patience. I did know,

Yea, God, thou knowest I knew this all that  
while, 85

From that day forth when even these eyes  
beheld

Fall the most faithful head in all the world,  
Toward her most loving and of me most loved,  
By doom of hers that was so loved of him  
He could not love me nor his life at all 90  
Nor his own soul nor aught that all men love,  
Nor could fear death nor very God, or care  
If there were aught more merciful in heaven  
Than love on earth had been to him. Chaste-  
lard!

I have not had the name upon my lips 95

That stands for sign of love the truest in man  
Since first love made him sacrifice of men,  
This long sad score of years retributive  
Since it was cast out of her heart and mind  
Who made it mean a dead thing; nor, I think, 100  
Will she remember it before she die

More than in France the memories of old friends  
Are like to have yet forgotten; but for me,  
Haply thou knowest, so death not all be death,  
If all these years I have had not in my mind 105  
Through all these chances this one thought in  
all,

That I shall never leave her till she die.  
Nor surely now shall I much longer serve

Who fain would lie down at her foot and sleep,  
 Fain, fain have done with waking. Yet my soul <sup>110</sup>  
 Knows, and yet God knows, I would set not  
 hand

To such a work as might put on the time  
 And make death's foot more forward for her  
 sake :

Yea, were it to deliver mine own soul  
 From bondage and long-suffering of my life, <sup>115</sup>  
 I would not set mine hand to work her wrong.  
 Tempted I was — but hath God need of me  
 To work his judgment, bring his time about,  
 Approve his justice if the word be just  
 That whoso doeth shall suffer his own deed, <sup>120</sup>  
 Bear his own blow, to weep tears back for tears,  
 And bleed for bloodshed? God should spare me  
 this

That once I held the one good hope on earth,  
 To be the mean and engine of her end  
 Or some least part at least therein : I prayed, <sup>125</sup>  
 God, give me so much grace — who now  
 should pray,  
 Tempt me not, God. My heart swelled once to  
 know

I bore her death about me ; as I think  
 Indeed I bear it : but what need hath God  
 That I should clench his doom with craft of  
 mine ?



What needs the wrath of hot Elizabeth  
Be blown aflame with mere past writing read,  
Which hath to enkindle it higher already proof  
Of present practice on her state and life?  
Shall fear of death or love of England fail 135  
Or memory faint or foresight fall stark blind,  
That there should need the whet and spur of  
shame

To turn her spirit into some chafing snake's  
And make its fang more feared for mortal? Yet  
I am glad, and I repent me not, to know 140  
I have the writing in my bosom sealed  
That bears such matter with her own hand  
signed

As she that yet repents her not to have writ  
Repents her not that she refrained to send  
And fears not but long since it felt the fire — 145  
Being fire itself to burn her, yet unquenched,  
But in my hand here covered harmless up  
Which had in charge to burn it. What per-  
chance

Might then the reading of it have wrought for us,  
If all this fiery poison of her scoffs 150  
Making the foul froth of a serpent's tongue  
More venomous, and more deadly toward her  
queen

Even Bess of Hardwick's bitterest babbling tales,  
Had touched at heart the Tudor vein indeed?

Enough it yet were surely, though that vein 155  
 Were now the gentlest that such hearts may hold  
 And all doubt's trembling balance that way bent,  
 To turn as with one mortal grain cast in  
 The scale of grace against her life that writ  
 And weigh down pity deathward.

*Enter Mary Stuart.*

*Mary Stuart.* Have we found 160  
 Such kindness of our keeper as may give  
 Some ease from expectation? or must hope  
 Still fret for ignorance how long here we stay  
 As men abiding judgment?

*Mary Beaton.* Now not long,  
 He tells me, need we think to tarry; since 165  
 The time and place of trial are set, next month  
 To hold it in the castle of Fotheringay.

*Mary Stuart.* Why, he knows well I were  
 full easily moved  
 To set forth hence; there must I find more scope  
 To commune with the ambassador of France 170  
 By letter thence to London: but, God help,  
 Think these folk truly, doth she verily think,  
 What never man durst yet nor woman dreamed,  
 May one that is nor man nor woman think,  
 To bring a queen born subject of no laws 175  
 Here in subjection of an alien law  
 By foreign force of judgment? Were she wise,  
 Might she not have me privily made away?

And being nor wise nor valiant but of tongue,  
 Could she find yet foolhardiness of heart 180  
 Enough to attain the rule of royal rights  
 With murderous madness? I will think not this  
 Till it be proven indeed.

*Mary Beaton.* A month come round,  
 This man protests, will prove it.

*Mary Stuart.* Ay! protests?  
 What protestation of what Protestant 185  
 Can unmake law that was of God's mouth  
 made,

Unwrite the writing of the world, unsay  
 The general saying of ages? If I go,  
 Compelled of God's hand or constrained of  
 man's,

Yet God shall bid me not nor man enforce 190  
 My tongue to plead before them for my life.  
 I had rather end as kings before me, die  
 Rather by shot or stroke of murderous hands,  
 Than so make answer once in face of man  
 As one brought forth to judgment. Are they  
 mad, 195

And she most mad for envious heart of all,  
 To make so mean account of me? Methought,  
 When late we came back hither soiled and spent  
 And sick with travel, I had seen their worst of  
 wrong

Full-faced, with its most outrage: when I found 200

My servant Curle's young new-delivered wife  
 Without priest's comfort and her babe un-  
 blessed

A nameless piteous thing born ere its time,  
 And took it from the mother's arms abed  
 And bade her have good comfort, since myself 205  
 Would take all charge against her husband laid  
 On mine own head to answer; deeming not  
 Man ever durst bid answer for myself  
 On charge as mortal: and mine almoner gone,  
 Did I not crave of Paulet for a grace 210  
 His chaplain might baptize me this poor babe,  
 And was denied it, and with mine own hands  
 For shame and charity moved to christen her  
 There with scant ritual in his heretic sight  
 By mine own woful name, whence God, I pray, 215  
 For her take off its presage? I misdeemed,  
 Who deemed all these and yet far more than  
 these

For one born queen indignities enough,  
 On one crowned head enough of buffets: more  
 Hath time's hand laid upon me: yet I keep 220  
 Faith in one word I spake to Paulet, saying  
 Two things were mine though I stood spoiled  
 of all

As of my letters and my privy coin  
 By pickpurse hands of office: these things yet  
 Might none take thievish hold upon to strip 225

His prisoner naked of her natural dower,  
 The blood yet royal running here unspilled  
 And that religion which I think to keep  
 Fast as this royal blood until I die.

So where at last and howsoe'er I fare 230

I need not much take thought, nor thou for love

Take of thy mistress pity; yet meseems

They dare not work their open will on me:

But God's it is that shall be done, and I

Find end of all in quiet. I would sleep 235

On this strange news of thine, that being  
 awake

I may the freshlier front my sense thereof

And thought of life or death. Come in with me.

SCENE III. — *Tyburn.*

*A Crowd of Citizens.*

*1st Citizen.* Is not their hour yet on? Men  
 say the queen

Bade spare no jot of torment in their end

That law might lay upon them.

*2nd Citizen.*

Truth it is,

To spare what scourge soe'er man's justice may

Twist for such caitiff traitors were to grieve 5

God's with mere inobservance. Hear you not

How yet the loud lewd braggarts of their side

Keep heart to threaten that for all this foil

They are not foiled indeed, but yet the work

Shall prosper with deliverance of their queen 10  
 And death for her of ours, though they should  
     give

Of their own lives for one an hundredfold?

*3rd Citizen.* These are bold mouths; one  
     that shall die to-day,

Being this last week arraigned at Westminster,  
 Had no such heart, they say, to his defence, 15  
 Who was the main head of their treasons.

*1st Cit.* Ay,

And yesterday, if truth belie not him,  
 Durst with his doomed hand write some word  
     of prayer

To the queen's self, her very grace, to crave  
 Grace of her for his gracelessness, that she 20  
 Might work on one too tainted to deserve  
 A miracle of compassion, whence her fame  
 For pity of sins too great for pity of man  
 Might shine more glorious than his crime  
     showed foul

In the eye of such a mercy.

*2nd Cit.* Yet men said 25

He spake at his arraignment soberly  
 With clear mild looks and gracious gesture,  
     showing

The purport of his treasons in such wise  
 That it seemed pity of him to hear them, how  
 All their beginnings and proceedings had 30

First head and fountain only for their spring  
From ill persuasions of that poisonous priest  
Who stood the guiltiest near, by this man's side  
Approved a valiant villain. Barnwell next,  
Who came but late from Ireland here to court, 35  
Made simply protestation of design  
To work no personal ill against the queen  
Nor paint rebellion's face as murder's red  
With blood imperial: Tichborne then avowed  
He knew the secret of their aim, and kept, 40  
And held forsooth himself no traitor; yet  
In the end would even plead guilty, Donne with  
him,

And Salisbury, who not less professed he still  
Stood out against the killing of the queen,  
And would not hurt her for a kingdom: so, 45  
When thus all these had pleaded, one by one  
Was each man bid say fairly, for his part,  
Why sentence should not pass: and Ballard first,  
Who had been so sorely racked he might not  
stand,

Spake, but as seems to none effect: of whom 50  
Said Babington again, he set them on,  
He first, and most of all him, who believed  
This priest had power to assoil his soul alive  
Of all else mortal treason: Ballard then,  
As in sad scorn—*Yea, Master Babington,* 55  
Quoth he, *lay all upon me, but I wish*

*For you the shedding of my blood might be  
The saving of your life: howbeit, for that,  
Say what you will; and I will say no more.*

Nor spake the swordsman Savage aught again, 60  
Who, first arraigned, had first avowed his cause  
Guilty: nor yet spake Tichborne aught: but  
Donne

Spake, and the same said Barnwell, each had  
sinned

For very conscience only: Salisbury last  
Besought the queen remission of his guilt. 65

Then spake Sir Christopher Hatton for the rest  
That sat with him commissioners, and showed  
How by dark doctrine of the seminaries  
And instance most of Ballard had been brought  
To extreme destruction here of body and soul 70

A sort of brave youths otherwise endowed  
With goodly gifts of birthright: and in fine  
There was the sentence given that here even  
now

Shows seven for dead men in our present sight  
And shall bring six to-morrow forth to die. 75

*Enter Babington, Ballard (carried in a chair), Tich-  
borne, Savage, Barnwell, Tilney, and Abington,  
guarded: Sheriff, Executioner, Chaplain, &c.*

*1st Cit.* What, will they speak?

*2nd Cit.* Ay; each hath leave in turn

To show what mood he dies in toward his cause.



*Ballard.* Sirs, ye that stand to see us take our  
doom,

I being here given this grace to speak to you  
Have but my word to witness for my soul, 80  
That all I have done and all designed to do  
Was only for advancement of true faith  
To furtherance of religion: for myself  
Aught would I never, but for Christ's dear  
church

Was mine intent all wholly, to redeem 85  
Her sore affliction in this age and land,  
As now may not be yet: which knowing for  
truth,

I am readier even at heart to die than live.  
And dying I crave of all men pardon whom  
My doings at all have touched, or who thereat 90  
Take scandal; and forgiveness of the queen  
If on this cause I have offended her.

*Savage.* The like say I, that have no skill in  
speech,

But heart enough with faith at heart to die,  
Seeing but for conscience and the common good, 95  
And no preferment but this general weal,  
I did attempt this business.

*Barnwell.* I confess

That I, whose seed was of that hallowed earth  
Whereof each pore hath sweated blood for Christ,  
Had note of these men's drifts, which I deny 100

That ever I consented with or could  
 In conscience hold for lawful. That I came  
 To spy for them occasions in the court  
 And there being noted of her majesty  
 She seeing mine eyes peer sharply like a man's 105  
 That had such purpose as she wist before  
 Prayed God that all were well — if this were  
                   urged,

I might make answer, it was not unknown  
 To divers of the council that I there  
 Had matters to solicit of mine own 110  
 Which thither drew me then : yet I confess  
 That Babington, espying me thence returned,  
 Asked me what news : to whom again I told,  
 Her majesty had been abroad that day,  
 With all the circumstance I saw there. Now 115  
 If I have done her majesty offence  
 I crave her pardon : and assuredly  
 If this my body's sacrifice might yet  
 Establish her in true religion, here  
 Most willingly should this be offered up. 120

*Tilney.* I came not here to reason of my faith,  
 But to die simply like a Catholic, praying  
 Christ give our queen Elizabeth long life,  
 And warning all youth born take heed by me.

*Abington.* I likewise, and if aught I have erred  
                   in aught 125  
 I crave but pardon as for ignorant sin,

Holding at all points firm the Catholic faith ;  
And all things charged against me I confess,  
Save that I ever sought her highness' death :  
In whose poor kingdom yet ere long I fear 130  
Will be great bloodshed.

*Sheriff.* Seest thou, Abington,  
Here all these people present of thy kind  
Whose blood shall be demanded at thy hands  
If dying thou hide what might endanger them ?  
Speak therefore, why or by what mortal mean 135  
Should there be shed such blood ?

*Abing.* All that I know  
You have on record : take but this for sure,  
This country lives for its iniquity  
Loathed of all countries, and God loves it not.  
Whereon I pray you trouble me no more 140  
With questions of this world, but let me pray  
And in mine own wise make my peace with  
God.

*Bab.* For me, first head of all this enterprise,  
I needs must make this record of myself,  
I have not conspired for profit, but in trust 145  
Of men's persuasions whence I stood assured  
This work was lawful which I should have done  
And meritorious as toward God ; for which  
No less I crave forgiveness of my queen  
And that my brother may possess my lands 150  
In heritage else forfeit with my head.

*Tich.* Good countrymen and my dear friends  
you look

For something to be said of me, that am

But an ill orator; and my text is worse.

Vain were it to make full discourse of all 155

This cause that brings me hither, which before

Was all made bare, and is well known to most

That have their eyes upon me: let me stand

For all young men, and most for those born high,

Their present warning here: a friend I had, 160

Ay, and a dear friend, one of whom I made

No small account, whose friendship for pure love

To this hath brought me: I may not deny

He told me all the matter, how set down,

And ready to be wrought; which always I 165

Held impious, and denied to deal therein:

But only for my friend's regard was I

Silent, and verified a saying in me,

Who so consented to him. Ere this thing  
chanced,

How brotherly we twain lived heart in heart 170

Together, in what flourishing estate,

This town well knows: of whom went all re-  
port

Through her loud length of Fleetstreet and the  
Strand

And all parts else that sound men's fortunate  
names,

But Babington and Tichborne? that therein 175  
There was no haughtiest threshold found of force  
To brave our entry; thus we lived our life,  
And wanted nothing we might wish for: then,  
For me, what less was in my head, God knows,  
Than high state matters? Give me now but  
leave 180

Scarce to declare the miseries I sustained  
Since I took knowledge of this action, whence  
To his estate I well may liken mine,  
Who could forbear not one forbidden thing  
To enjoy all else afforded of the world: 185  
The terror of my conscience hung on me;  
Who, taking heed what perils girt me, went  
To Sir John Peters hence in Essex, there  
Appointing that my horses by his mean  
Should meet me here in London, whence I  
thought 190

To flee into the country: but being here  
I heard how all was now bewrayed abroad:  
Whence Adam-like we fled into the woods  
And there were taken. My dear countrymen,  
Albeit my sorrows well may be your joy, 195  
Yet mix your smiles with tears: pity my case,  
Who, born out of an house whose name de-  
scends

Even from two hundred years ere English earth  
Felt Norman heel upon her, were it yet

Till this mishap of mine unspotted.      Sirs,      200  
 I have a wife, and one sweet child : my wife,  
 My dear wife Agnes : and my grief is there,  
 And for six sisters too left on my hand :  
 All my poor servants were dispersed, I know,  
 Upon their master's capture : all which things      205  
 Most heartily I sorrow for : and though  
 Nought might I less have merited at her hands,  
 Yet had I looked for pardon of my fault  
 From the queen's absolute grace and clemency ;  
 That the unexpired remainder of my years      210  
 Might in some sort have haply recompensed  
 This former guilt of mine whereof I die :  
 But seeing such fault may find not such release  
 Even of her utter mercies, heartily  
 I crave at least of her and all the world      215  
 Forgiveness, and to God commend my soul,  
 And to men's memory this my penitence  
 Till our death's record die from out the land.

*1st Cit.* God pardon him ! Stand back : what  
 ail these knaves

To drive and thrust upon us ? Help me, sir ;      220  
 I thank you : hence we take them full in view :  
 Hath yet the hangman there his knife in hand ?

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III  
BURGHLEY





## ACT III.

SCENE I. *The presence-chamber in Fotheringay Castle.*  
*At the upper end, a chair of state as for Queen Elizabeth; opposite, in the centre of the hall, a chair for Mary Stuart. The Commissioners seated on either side along the wall: to the right the Earls, with Lord Chancellor Bromley and Lord Treasurer Burghley; to the left, the Barons, with the Knights of the Privy Council, among them Walsingham and Paulet; Popham, Egerton, and Gawdy, as Counsel for the Crown. Enter Mary Stuart, supported by Sir Andrew Melville, and takes her place.*

*Mary Stuart.* Here are full many men of counsel met;

Not one for me. *The Chancellor rises.*

*Bromley.* Madam, this court is held  
To make strait inquisition as by law  
Of what with grief of heart our queen has heard,  
A plot upon her life, against the faith  
Here in her kingdom established: on which  
cause

Our charge it is to exact your answer here  
And put to proof your guilt or innocence.

*Mary Stuart (rising).* Sirs, whom by strange  
constraint I stand before,  
My lords, and not my judges, since no law

Can hold to mortal judgment answerable  
 A princess free-born of all courts on earth,  
 I rise not here to make response as one  
 Responsible toward any for my life  
 Or of mine acts accountable to man, 15  
 Who see none higher save only God in heaven :  
 I am no natural subject of your land  
 That I should here plead as a criminal charged,  
 Nor in such wise appear I now : I came  
 On your queen's faith to seek in England help 20  
 By trothplight pledged me : where by promise-  
 breach

I am even since then her prisoner held in ward :  
 Yet, understanding by report of you  
 Some certain things I know not of to be  
 Against me brought on record, by my will 25  
 I stand content to hear and answer these.

*Brom.* Madam, there lives none born on earth  
 so high

Who for this land's laws' breach within this land  
 Shall not stand answerable before those laws.

*Burghley.* Let there be record of the prisoner's  
 plea 30

And answer given such protest here set down,  
 And so proceed we to this present charge.

*Gawdy.* My lords, to unfold by length of cir-  
 cumstance

The model of this whole conspiracy

Should lay the pattern of all treasons bare 35  
That ever brought high state in danger: this  
No man there lives among us but hath heard,  
How certain men of our queen's household folk  
Being wrought on by persuasion of their priests  
Drew late a bond between them, binding these 40  
With others of their faith accomplices  
Directed first of Anthony Babington  
By mean of six for execution chosen  
To slay the queen their mistress, and thereon  
Make all her trustiest men of trust away; 45  
As my lord treasurer Burghley present here,  
Lord Hunsdon, and Sir Francis Walsingham,  
And one that held in charge awhile agone  
This lady now on trial, Sir Francis Knowles.  
That she was hereto privy, to her power 50  
Approving and abetting their device,  
It shall not stand us in much need to show  
Whose proofs are manifoldly manifest  
On record written of their hands and hers.

*Mary Stuart.* Of all this I know nothing:

Babington 55

I have used for mine intelligencer, sent  
With letters charged at need, but never yet  
Spake with him, never writ him word of mine  
As privy to these close conspiracies  
Nor word of his had from him. Never came 60  
One harmful thought upon me toward your queen,

Nor knowledge ever that of other hearts  
 Was harm designed against her. Proofs, ye say,  
 Forsooth ye hold to impeach me : I desire  
 But only to behold and handle them 65  
 If they in sooth of sense be tangible  
 More than mere air and shadow.

*Burgh.* Let the clerk  
 Produce those letters writ from Babington.

*Mary Stuart.* What then ? it may be such  
 were writ of him :  
 Be it proved that they came ever in my hands. 70  
 If Babington affirm so much, I say  
 He, or who else will say it, lies openly.

*Gaw.* Here is the man's confession writ, and  
 here  
 Ballard's the Jesuit, and the soldier's here,  
 Savage, that served with Parma.

*Mary Stuart.* What of these ? 75  
 Traitors they were, and traitor-like they lied.

*Gaw.* And here the last her letter of response  
 Confirming and approving in each point  
 Their purpose, writ direct to Babington.

*Mary Stuart.* My letter ? none of mine it is :  
 perchance 80  
 It may be in my cipher characterized,  
 But never came from or my tongue or hand :  
 I have sought mine own deliverance, and thereto  
 Solicited of my friends their natural help :

Yet certain whom I list not name there were, 85  
Whose offers made of help to set me free  
Receiving, yet I answered not a word.

Howbeit, desiring to divert the storm  
Of persecution from the church, for this  
To your queen's grace I have made most earnest  
suit : 90

But for mine own part I would purchase not  
This kingdom with the meanest one man's death  
In all its commonalty, much less the queen's.  
Many there be have dangerously designed  
Things that I knew not : yea, but very late 95

There came a letter to my hand which craved  
My pardon if by enterprise of some  
Were undertaken aught unknown of me :

A cipher lightly may one counterfeit,  
As he that vaunted him of late in France 100

To be my son's base brother : and I fear  
Lest this, for aught mine ignorance of it knows,  
May be that secretary's fair handiwork  
Who sits to judge me, and hath practised late,  
I hear, against my son's life and mine own. 105

But I protest I have not so much as thought  
Nor dreamed upon destruction of the queen :  
I had rather spend most gladly mine own life  
Than for my sake the Catholics should be  
thus

Afflicted only in very hate of me 110

And drawn to death so cruel as these tears  
Gush newly forth to think of.

*Burgh.*

Here no man  
Who hath showed himself true subject to the state  
Was ever for religion done to death :  
But some for treason, that against the queen      115  
Upheld the pope's bull and authority.

*Mary Stuart.* Yet have I heard it otherwise  
affirmed

And read in books set forth in print as much.

*Burgh.* They that so write say too the queen  
hath here

Made forfeit of her royal dignity.      120

*Walsingham.* Here I call God to record on  
my part

That personally or as a private man  
I have done nought misbeseeming honesty,  
Nor as I bear a public person's place  
Done aught thereof unworthy. I confess      125

That, being right careful of the queen's estate  
And safety of this realm, I have curiously  
Searched out the practices against it : nay,  
Herein had Ballard offered me his help,

I durst not have denied him ; yea, I would      130  
Have recompensed the pains he had taken. Say  
I have practised aught with him, why did he not,  
To save his life, reveal it ?

*Mary Stuart.*

Pray you, sir,

Take no displeasure at me : truth it is  
 Report has found me of your dealings, blown 135  
 From lip to ear abroad, wherein myself  
 I put no credit : and could but desire  
 Yourself would all as little make account  
 Of slanders flung on me. Spies, sure, are men  
 Of doubtful credit, which dissemble things 140  
 Far other than they speak. Do not believe  
 That I gave ever or could give consent  
 Once to the queen's destruction : I would never,  
 These tears are bitter witness, never would  
 Make shipwreck of my soul by compassing 145  
 Destruction of my dearest sister.

*Gawdy.*

This

Shall soon by witness be disproved : as here  
 Even by this letter from Charles Paget's hand  
 Transcribed, which Curle your secretary hath  
 borne

Plain witness you received, touching a league 150  
 Betwixt Mendoza and Ballard, who conferred  
 Of this land's foreordained invasion, thence  
 To give you freedom.

*Mary Stuart.*

What of this? ye shoot

Wide of the purpose : this approves not me  
 Consenting to the queen's destruction.

*Gawdy.*

That

Stands proven enough by word of Babington 155  
 Who dying avowed it, and by letters passed

From him to you, whom he therein acclaims  
 As his most dread and sovereign lady and queen,  
 And by the way makes mention passingly 160  
 Of a plot laid by transference to convey  
 This kingdom to the Spaniard.

*Mary Stuart.* I confess  
 There came a priest unto me, saying if I  
 Would not herein bear part I with my son  
 Alike should be debarred the inheritance : 165  
 His name ye shall not have of me : but this  
 Ye know, that openly the Spaniard lays  
 Claim to your kingdom, and to none will give  
 Place ever save to me.

*Burghley.* Still stands the charge  
 On written witness of your secretaries 170  
 Great on all points against you.

*Mary Stuart.* Wherefore then  
 Are not these writers with these writings brought  
 To outface me front to front ? For Gilbert Curle,  
 He is in the Frenchman's hands a waxen toy,  
 Whom the other, once mine uncle's secretary, 175  
 The cardinal's of Lorraine, at his mere will  
 Moulds, turns, and tempers : being himself a  
 knave

That may be hired or scared with peril or coin  
 To swear what thing men bid him. Truth again  
 Is this that I deny not, seeing myself 180  
 Against all right held fast in English ward,









My friends in faith, to a cardinal's dignity,  
 And that, I trust, without offence: except  
 It be not held as lawful on my part  
 To commune with the chiefest of my creed 260  
 By written word on matters of mine own  
 As for your queen with churchfolk of her kind.

*Burgh.* Well were it, madam, that with some  
 of yours

You had held less close communion: since by  
 proof

Reiterated from those your secretaries 265  
 It seems you know right well that Morgan, who  
 Sent Parry privily to despatch the queen,  
 And have assigned him annual pension.

*Mary Stuart.* This

I know not, whether or no your charge be truth,  
 But I do know this Morgan hath lost all 270  
 For my sake, and in honour sure I am  
 That rather to relieve him I stand bound  
 Than to revenge an injury done your queen  
 By one that lives my friend, and hath deserved  
 Well at mine hands: yet, being not bound to this, 275  
 I did affright the man from such attempts  
 Of crimes against her, who contrariwise  
 Hath out of England openly assigned  
 Pensions to Gray my traitor, and the Scots  
 Mine adversaries, as also to my son, 280  
 To hire him to forsake me.

*Burgh.*

Nay, but seeing

By negligence of them that steered the state  
 The revenues of Scotland sore impaired  
 Somewhat in bounty did her grace bestow  
 Upon your son the king, her kinsman : whom 285  
 She would not, being to her so near of blood,  
 Forget from charity. No such help it was  
 Nor no such honest service that your friends  
 Designed you, who by letters hither writ  
 To Paget and Mendoza sent as here 290  
 Large proffers of strange aid from oversea  
 To right you by her ruin.

*Mary Stuart.* Here was nought  
 Aimed for your queen's destruction : nor is this  
 Against me to be charged, that foreign friends  
 Should labour for my liberty. Thus much 295  
 At sundry times I have signified aloud  
 By open message to her, that I would still  
 Seek mine own freedom. Who shall bar me  
 this ?

Who tax me with unreason, that I sent  
 Unjust conditions on my part to be 300  
 To her propounded, which now many times  
 Have alway found rejection ? yea, when even  
 For hostages I proffered in my stead  
 To be delivered up with mine own son  
 The duke of Guise's, both to stand in pledge 305  
 That nor your queen nor kingdom should through  
 me

Take aught of damage ; so that hence by proof  
 I see myself utterly from all hope  
 Already barred of freedom. But I now  
 Am dealt with most unworthily, whose fame 310  
 And honourable repute are called in doubt  
 Before such foreign men of law as may  
 By miserable conclusions of their craft  
 Draw every thin and shallow circumstance  
 Out into compass of a consequence : 315  
 Whereas the anointed heads and consecrate  
 Of princes are not subject to such laws  
 As private men are. Next, whereas ye are given  
 Authority but to look such matters through  
 As tend to the hurt of your queen's person, yet 320  
 Here is the cause so handled, and so far  
 Here are my letters wrested, that the faith  
 Which I profess, the immunity and state  
 Of foreign princes, and their private right  
 Of mutual speech by word reciprocate 325  
 From royal hand to royal, all in one  
 Are called in question, and myself by force  
 Brought down beneath my kingly dignity  
 And made to appear before a judgment-seat  
 As one held guilty ; to none end but this, 330  
 All to none other purpose but that I  
 Might from all natural favour of the queen  
 Be quite excluded, and my right cut off  
 From claim hereditary : whereas I stand

Here of mine own goodwill to clear myself 335  
Of all objected to me, lest I seem  
To have aught neglected in the full defence  
Of mine own innocency and honour. This  
Would I bring likewise in your minds, how once  
This queen herself of yours, Elizabeth, 340  
Was drawn in question of conspiracy  
That Wyatt raised against her sister, yet  
Ye know she was most innocent. For me,  
With very heart's religion I affirm,  
Though I desire the Catholics here might stand 345  
Assured of safety, this I would not yet  
Buy with the blood and death of any one.  
And on mine own part rather would I play  
Esther than Judith; for the people's sake  
To God make intercession, than deprive 350  
The meanest of the people born of life.  
Mine enemies have made broad report aloud  
That I was irreligious: yet the time  
Has been I would have learnt the faith ye hold,  
But none would suffer me, for all I sought, 355  
To find such teaching at your teachers' hands;  
As though they cared not what my soul became.  
And now at last, when all ye can ye have done  
Against me, and have barred me from my right,  
Ye may chance fail yet of your cause and hope. 360  
To God and to the princes of my kin  
I make again appeal, from you again

Record my protestation, and reject  
All judgment of your court: I had rather die  
Thus undishonoured, even a thousand deaths, 365  
Than so bring down the height of majesty;  
Yea, and thereby confess myself as bound  
By all the laws of England, even in faith  
Of things religious, who could never learn  
What manner of laws these were: I am destitute 370  
Of counsellors, and who shall be my peers  
To judge my cause through and give doom thereon  
I am ignorant wholly, being an absolute queen,  
And will do nought which may impair that state  
In me nor other princes, nor my son; 375  
Since yet my mind is not dejected, nor  
Will I sink under my calamity.  
My notes are taken from me, and no man  
Dares but step forth to be my advocate.  
I am clear from all crime done against the queen, 380  
I have stirred not up one man against her: yet,  
Albeit of many dangers overpast  
I have thoroughly forewarned her, still I found  
No credit, but have always been contemned,  
Though nearest to her in blood allied. When late 385  
Ye made association, and thereon  
An act against their lives on whose behalf,  
Though innocent even as ignorance of it, aught  
Might be contrived to endangering of the queen  
From foreign force abroad, or privy plots 390



At home of close rebellion, I foresaw  
That, whatsoever of peril so might rise  
Or more than all this for religion's sake,  
My many mortal enemies in her court  
Should lay upon me all the charge, and I 395  
Bear the whole blame of all men. Certainly,  
I well might take it hardly, nor without  
High cause, that such confederacy was made  
With mine own son, and I not knowing : but this  
I speak not of, being not so grieved thereat 400  
As that mine own dear sister, that the queen,  
Is misinformed of me, and I, now kept  
These many years in so strait prison, and grown  
Lame of my limbs, have lien neglected, nor  
For all most reasonable conditions made 405  
Or proffered to redeem my liberty  
Found audience or acceptance : and at last  
Here am I set with none to plead for me.  
But this I pray, that on this matter of mine  
Another meeting there be kept, and I 410  
Be granted on my part an advocate  
To hold my cause up ; or that seeing ye know  
I am a princess, I may be believed  
By mine own word, being princely : for should I  
Stand to your judgment, who most plainly I see 415  
Are armed against me strong in prejudice,  
It were mine extreme folly : more than this,  
That ever I came to England in such trust

As of the plighted friendship of your queen  
 And comfort of her promise. Look, my lords, 420  
 Here on this ring : her pledge of love was this  
 And surety sent me when I lay in bonds  
 Of mine own rebels once : regard it well :  
 In trust of this I came amongst you : none  
 But sees what faith I have found to keep this  
 trust. 425

*Burgh.* Whereas I bear a double person, being  
 Commissioner first, then counsellor in this  
 cause,

From me as from the queen's commissioner here  
 Receive a few words first. Your protest made  
 Is now on record, and a transcript of it 430  
 Shall be delivered you. To us is given  
 Under the queen's hand our authority, whence  
 Is no appeal, this grant being ratified  
 With the great seal of England ; nor are we  
 With prejudice come hither, but to judge 435  
 By the straight rule of justice. On their part,  
 These the queen's learned counsel here in place  
 Do level at nothing else but that the truth  
 May come to light, how far you have made  
 offence

Against the person of the queen. To us 440  
 Full power is given to hear and diligently  
 Examine all the matter, though yourself  
 Were absent : yet for this did we desire

To have your presence here, lest we might seem  
To have derogated from your honour : nor 445  
Designed to object against you anything  
But what you knew of, or took part therein,  
Against the queen's life bent. For this were  
these

Your letters brought in question, but to unfold  
Your aim against her person, and therewith 450  
All matters to it belonging ; which perforce  
Are so with other matters interlaced  
As none may sever them. Hence was there  
need

Set all these forth, not parcels here and there,  
Whose circumstances do the assurance give 455  
Upon what points you dealt with Babington.

*Mary Stuart.* The circumstances haply may  
find proof,

But the fact never. Mine integrity  
Nor on the memory nor the credit hangs  
Of these my secretaries, albeit I know 460  
They are men of honest hearts : yet if they have  
Confessed in fear of torture anything  
Or hope of guerdon and impunity,  
It may not be admitted, for just cause,  
Which I will elsewhere allege. Men's minds 465  
Are with affections diversly distraught  
And borne about of passion : nor would these  
Have ever avowed such things against me, save

For their own hope and profit. Letters may  
 Toward other hands be outwardly addressed 470  
 Than they were writ for: yea, and many times  
 Have many things been privily slipped in mine  
 Which from my tongue came never. Were I not  
 Reft of my papers, and my secretary  
 Kept from me, better might I then confute 475  
 These things cast up against me.

*Burgh.* But there shall  
 Be nothing brought against you save what last  
 Stands charged, even since the nineteenth day  
 of June:  
 Nor would your papers here avail you, seeing  
 Your secretaries, and Babington himself, 480  
 Being of the rack unquestioned, have affirmed  
 You sent those letters to him; which though  
 yourself  
 Deny, yet whether more belief should here  
 On affirmation or negation hang  
 Let the commissioners judge. But, to come  
 back, 485  
 This next I tell you as a counsellor,  
 Time after time you have put forth many things  
 Propounded for your freedom; that all these  
 Have fallen all profitless, 't is long of you,  
 And of the Scots; in no wise of the queen. 490  
 For first the lords of Scotland, being required,  
 Flatly refused, to render up the king

In hostage : and when treaty last was held  
 Upon your freedom, then was Parry sent  
 By your dependant Morgan privily 495  
 To make the queen away by murder.

*Mary Stuart.* Ah!

You are my adversary.

*Burgh.* Yea, surely I am  
 To the queen's adversaries an adversary.  
 But now hereof enough : let us proceed  
 Henceforth to proofs.

*Mary Stuart.* I will not hear them.

*Burgh.* Yet 500

Hear them will we.

*Mary Stuart.* And in another place  
 I too will hear them, and defend myself.

*Gaw.* First let your letters to Charles Paget  
 speak,

Wherein you show him there is none other way  
 For Spain to bring the Netherlands again 505  
 To the old obedience, but by setting up  
 A prince in England that might help his cause :  
 Then to Lord Paget, to bring hastilier  
 His forces up for help to invade this land :  
 And Cardinal Allen's letter, hailing you 510  
 His most dread sovereign lady, and signifying  
 The matter to the Prince of Parma's care  
 To be commended.

*Mary Stuart.* I am so sore beset

I know not how by point and circumstance  
To meet your manifold impeachments: this 515  
I see through all this charge for evil truth,  
That Babington and my two secretaries  
Have even to excuse themselves accused me:

yet,

As touching that conspiracy, this I say,  
Of those six men for execution chosen 520  
I never heard: and all the rest is nought  
To this pretended purpose of your charge.  
For Cardinal Allen, whatsoever he have writ,  
I hold him for a reverend prelate, so  
To be esteemed, no more: none save the Pope 525  
Will I acknowledge for the church's head  
And sovereign thence on thought or spirit of  
mine:

But in what rank and place I stand esteemed  
Of him and foreign princes through the world  
I know not: neither can I hinder them 530  
By letters writ of their own hearts and hands  
To hail me queen of England. As for those  
Whose duty and plain allegiance sworn to me  
Stands flawed in all men's sight, my secretaries,  
These merit no belief. They which have once 535  
Forsworn themselves, albeit they swear again  
With oaths and protestations ne'er so great,  
Are not to be believed. Nor may these men  
By what sworn oath soever hold them bound

In court of conscience, seeing they have sworn  
to me 540

Their secrecy and fidelity before,  
And are no subjects of this country. Nau  
Hath many times writ other than I bade,  
And Curle sets down whate'er Nau bids him  
write ;

But for my part I am ready in all to bear 545  
The burden of their fault, save what may lay  
A blot upon mine honour. Haply too  
These things did they confess to save themselves ;  
Supposing their avowal could hurt not me,  
Who, being a queen, they thought, good ignorant  
men, 550

More favourably must needs be dealt withal.  
For Ballard, I ne'er heard of any such,  
But of one Hallard once that proffered me  
Such help as I would none of, knowing this man  
Had vowed his service too to Walsingham. 555

*Gaw.* Next, from your letters to Mendoza,  
writ

By Curle, as freely his confession shows,  
In privy cipher, take these few brief notes  
For perfect witness of your full design.  
You find yourself, the Spaniard hears thereby, 560  
Sore troubled what best course to take anew  
For your affairs this side the sea, whereon  
Charles Paget hath a charge to impart from you

Some certain overtures to Spain and him  
In your behalf, whom you desire with prayer 565  
Show freely what he thinks may be obtained  
Thus from the king his master. One point more  
Have you reserved thereon depending, which  
On your behalf you charge him send the king  
Some secret word concerning, no man else, 570  
If this be possible, being privy to it :  
Even this, that seeing your son's great obstinacy  
In heresy, and foreseeing too sure thereon  
Most imminent danger and harm thence like to  
    ensue  
To the Catholic church, he coming to bear rule 575  
Within this kingdom, you are resolved at heart  
In case your son be not reduced again  
To the Catholic faith before your death, whereof  
Plainly you say small hope is yours so long  
As he shall bide in Scotland, to give up 580  
To that said king, and grant in absolute right,  
Your claim upon succession to this crown,  
By your last will made; praying him on this  
    cause  
From that time forth wholly to take yourself  
Into his keeping, and therewith the state 585  
And charge of all this country : which, you say,  
You cannot for discharge of conscience think  
That you could put into a prince's hands  
More zealous for your faith, and abler found



To build it strong upon this side again, 590  
 Even as through all parts else of Christendom.  
 But this let silence keep in secret, lest  
 Being known it be your dowry's loss in France,  
 And open breach in Scotland with your son,  
 And in this realm of England utterly 595  
 Your ruin and destruction. On your part  
 Next is he bidden thank his lord the king  
 For liberal grace and sovereign favour shown  
 Lord Paget and his brother, which you pray him  
 Most earnestly to increase, and gratify 600  
 Poor Morgan with some pension for your sake  
 Who hath not for your sake only endured so much  
 But for the common cause. Likewise, and last,  
 Is one he knows commended to his charge  
 With some more full supply to be sustained 605  
 Than the entertainment that yourself allot  
 According to the little means you have.

*Burgh.* Hereon stands proof apparent of that  
 charge

Which you but now put by, that you design  
 To give your right supposed upon this realm 610  
 Into the Spaniard's hold; and on that cause  
 Lie now at Rome Allen and Parsons, men  
 Your servants and our traitors.

*Mary Stuart.* No such proof  
 Lives but by witness of revolted men,  
 My traitors and your helpers; who to me 615

Have broken their allegiance bound by oath.  
 When being a prisoner clothed about with cares  
 I languished out of hope of liberty,  
 Nor yet saw hope to effect of those things aught  
 Which many and many looked for at my hands, 620  
 Declining now through age and sickness, this  
 To some seemed good, even for religion's sake,  
 That the succession here of the English crown  
 Should or be stablished in the Spanish king  
 Or in some English Catholic. And a book 625  
 Was sent to me to avow the Spaniard's claim ;  
 Which being of me allowed not, some there were  
 In whose displeasure thence I fell ; but now  
 Seeing all my hope in England desperate grown,  
 I am fully minded to reject no aid 630  
 Abroad, but resolute to receive it.

*Walsingham.*

Sirs,

Bethink you, were the kingdom so conveyed,  
 What should become of you and all of yours,  
 Estates and honours and posterities,  
 Being to such hands delivered.

*Burgh.*

Nay, but these 635

In no such wise can be conveyed away  
 By personal will, but by successive right  
 Still must descend in heritage of law.  
 Whereto your own words witness, saying if this  
 Were blown abroad your cause were utterly 640  
 Lost in all hearts of English friends. Therein

Your thoughts hit right : for here in all men's  
                  minds

That are not mad with envying at the truth  
Death were no loathlier than a stranger king.  
If you would any more, speak : if not aught,      645  
This cause is ended.

*Mary Stuart.*           I require again  
Before a full and open parliament  
Hearing, or speech in person with the queen,  
Who shall, I hope, have of a queen regard,  
And with the council. So, in trust hereof,      650  
I crave a word with some of you apart,  
And of this main assembly take farewell.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.



ACT IV  
ELIZABETH



ACT IV.

SCENE I. — *Richmond.*

*Walsingham and Davison.*

*Walsingham.* It is God's wrath, too sure, that  
holds her hand ;

His plague upon this people, to preserve  
By her sole mean her deadliest enemy, known  
By proof more potent than approof of law  
In all points guilty, but on more than all 5  
Toward all this country dangerous. To take off  
From the court held last month at Fotheringay  
Authority with so full commission given  
To pass upon her judgment — suddenly  
Cut short by message of some three lines writ 10  
With hurrying hand at midnight, and despatched  
To maim its work upon the second day,  
What else may this be in so wise a queen  
But madness, as a brand to sear the brain  
Of one by God infatuate? yea, and now 15  
That she receives the French ambassador  
With one more special envoy from his king,  
Except their message touch her spleen with fire  
And so undo itself, we cannot tell  
What doubt may work upon her. Had we but 20  
Some sign more evident of some private seal

Confirming toward her by more personal proof  
 The Scottish queen's inveteracy, for this  
 As for our country plucked from imminent death  
 We might thank God: but with such gracious  
 words

25

Of piteous challenge and imperial plea  
 She hath wrought by letter on our mistress' mind,  
 We may not think her judgment so could slip,  
 Borne down with passion or forgetfulness,  
 As to leave bare her bitter root of heart  
 And core of evil will there labouring.

30

*Davison.*

Yet

I see no shade of other surety cast  
 From any sign of likelihood. It were  
 Not shameful more than dangerous, though she  
 bade,

To have her prisoner privily made away ;  
 Yet stands the queen's heart wellnigh fixed hereon  
 When aught may seem to fix it ; then as fast  
 Wavers, but veers to that bad point again  
 Whence blowing the wind blows down her  
 honour, nor

35

Brings surety of life with fame's destruction.

*Wal.*

Ay, 40

We are no Catholic keepers, and his charge  
 Need fear no poison in our watch-dog's fang,  
 Though he show honest teeth at her, to threat  
 Thieves' hands with loyal danger.



*Enter Queen Elizabeth, attended by Burghley, Leicester, Hunsdon, Hatton, and others of the Council.*

*Elizabeth.*

No, my lords,

We are not so weak of wit as men that need 45  
Be counselled of their enemies. Blame us not  
That we accuse your friendship on this cause  
Of too much fearfulness: France we will hear,  
Nor doubt but France shall hear us all as loud  
As friend or foe may threaten or protest, 50  
Of our own heart advised, and resolute more  
Than hearts that need men's counsel. Bid them in.

*Enter Châteauneuf and Bellièvre, attended.*

From our fair cousin of France what message,  
sirs?

*Bellièvre.* I, madam, have in special charge to  
lay

The king's mind open to your majesty, 55  
Which gives my tongue first leave of speech  
more free

Than from a common envoy. Sure it is,  
No man more grieves at what his heart abhors,  
The counsels of your highness' enemies,  
Than doth the king of France: wherein how far 60  
The queen your prisoner have borne part, or may  
Seem of their works partaker, he can judge  
Nought: but much less the king may understand  
What men may stand accusers, who rise up  
Judge in so great a matter. Men of law 65

May lay their charges on a subject : but  
The queen of Scotland, dowager queen of France,  
And sister made by wedlock to the king,  
To none being subject, can be judged of none  
Without such violence done on rule as breaks 70  
Prerogative of princes. Nor may man  
That looks upon your present majesty  
In such clear wise apparent, and retains  
Remembrance of your name through all the world  
For virtuous wisdom, bring his mind to think 75  
That England's royal-souled Elizabeth,  
Being set so high in fame, can so forget  
Wise Plato's word, that common souls are  
wrought

Out of dull iron and slow lead, but kings  
Of gold untempered with so vile alloy 80  
As makes all metal up of meaner men.  
But say this were not thus, and all men's awe  
Were from all time toward kingship merely vain,  
And state no more worth reverence, yet the plea  
Were nought which here your ministers pretend, 85  
That while the queen of Scots lives you may live  
No day that knows not danger. Were she dead,  
Rather might then your peril wax indeed  
To shape and sense of heavier portent, whom  
The Catholic states now threat not, nor your land, 90  
For this queen's love, but rather for their faith's,  
Whose cause, were she by violent hand removed,

Could be but furthered, and its enterprise  
Put on more strong and prosperous pretext; yea,  
You shall but draw the invasion on this land 95  
Whose threat you so may think to stay, and bring  
Imminence down of inroad. Thus far forth  
The queen of Scots hath for your person been  
Even as a targe or buckler which has caught  
All intercepted shafts against your state 100  
Shot, or a stone held fast within your hand,  
Which, if you cast it thence in fear or wrath  
To smite your adversary, is cast away,  
And no mean left therein for menace. If  
You lay but hand upon her life, albeit 105  
There were that counselled this, her death will  
make

Your enemies weapons of their own despair  
And give their whetted wrath excuse and edge  
More plausibly to strike more perilously.  
Your grace is known for strong in foresight: we 110  
These nineteen years of your wise reign have  
kept

Fast watch in France upon you: of those claims  
Which lineally this queen here prisoner may  
Put forth on your succession have you made  
The stoutest rampire of your rule: and this 115  
Is grown a byword with us, that their cause  
Who shift the base whereon their policies lean  
Bows down toward ruin: and of loyal heart



In recompense she hath three times sought my  
life.

No grief that on this head yet ever fell 145

Shook ever from mine eyes so many a tear

As this last plot upon it. I have read

As deep I doubt me in as many books

As any queen or prince in Christendom,

Yet never chanced on aught so strange and sad 150

As this my state's calamity. Mine own life

Is by mere nature precious to myself,

And in mine own realm I can live not safe.

I am a poor lone woman, girt about

With secret enemies that perpetually 155

Lay wait for me to kill me. From your king

Why have not I my traitor to my hands

Delivered up, who now this second time

Hath sought to slay me, Morgan? On my part,

Had mine own cousin Hunsdon here conspired 160

Against the French king's life, he had found

not so

Refuge of me, nor even for kindred's sake

From the edge of law protection : and this cause

Needs present evidence of this man's mouth.

*Bell.* Madam, there stand against the queen

of Scots 165

Already here in England on this charge

So many and they so dangerous witnesses

No need can be to bring one over more :

Nor can the king show such unnatural heart  
As to send hither a knife for enemies' hands 170  
To cut his sister's throat. Most earnestly  
My lord expects your resolution: which  
If we receive as given against his plea,  
I must crave leave to part for Paris hence.  
Yet give me pardon first if yet once more 175  
I pray your highness be assured, and so  
Take heed in season, you shall find this queen  
More dangerous dead than living. Spare her life,  
And not my lord alone but all that reign  
Shall be your sureties in all Christian lands 180  
Against all scathe of all conspiracies  
Made on her party: while such remedies' ends  
As physic states with bloodshedding, to cure  
Danger by death, bring fresh calamities  
Far oftener forth than the old are healed of them 185  
Which so men thought to medicine. To refrain  
From that red-handed way of rule, and set  
Justice no higher than mercy sits beside,  
Is the first mean of kings' prosperity  
That would reign long: nor will my lord believe 190  
Your highness could put off yourself so much  
As to reverse and tread upon the law  
That you thus long have kept and honourably:  
But should this perilous purpose hold right on,  
I am bounden by my charge to say, the king 195  
Will not regard as liable to your laws

A queen's imperial person, nor will hold  
 Her death as but the general wrong of kings  
 And no more his than as his brethren's all,  
 But as his own and special injury done, 200  
 More than to these injurious.

*Eliz.* Doth your lord  
 Bid you speak thus ?

*Bell.* Ay, madam : from his mouth  
 Had I command what speech to use.

*Eliz.* You have done  
 Better to speak than he to send it. Sir,  
 You shall not presently depart this land 205  
 As one denied of mere discourtesy.

I will return an envoy of mine own  
 To speak for me at Paris with the king.  
 You shall bear back a letter from my hand,  
 And give your lord assurance, having seen, 210  
 I cannot be so frightened with men's threats  
 That they shall not much rather move my mind  
 To quicken than to slack the righteous doom  
 Which none must think by menace to put back,  
 Or daunt it with defiance. Sirs, good day. 215

*Exeunt Ambassadors.*

I were as one belated with false lights  
 If I should think to steer my darkling way  
 By twilight furtherance of their wiles and words.  
 Think you, my lords, France yet would have  
 her live ?

*Burghley.* If there be other than the apparent  
end

220

Hid in this mission to your majesty,  
Mine envoys can by no means fathom it,  
Who deal for me at Paris: fear of Spain  
Lays double hand as 't were upon the king,  
Lest by removal of the queen of Scots  
A way be made for peril in the claim  
More potent then of Philip; and if there come  
From his Farnese note of enterprise  
Or danger this way tending, France will yet  
Cleave to your friendship though his sister die.

225

230

*Eliz.* So, in your mind, this half-souled bro-  
ther would

Steer any way that might keep safe his sail  
Against a southern wind, which here, he thinks,  
Her death might strengthen from the north again  
To blow against him off our subject straits,  
Made servile then and Spanish? Yet perchance  
There swells behind our seas a heart too high  
To bow more easily down, and bring this land  
More humbly to such handling, than their waves  
Bow down to ships of strangers, or their storms  
To breath of any lord on earth but God.  
What thinks our cousin?

235

240

*Hunsdon.* That if Spain or France  
Or both be stronger than the heart in us  
Which beats to battle ere they menace, why,





Had we such friends of all our servants, need  
Our mind be now distraught with dangerous  
doubts

That find no screen from dangers. Yet meseems  
One doubt stands now removed, if doubt there  
were

Of aught from Scotland ever: Walsingham, 270  
You should have there intelligence whereof  
To make these lords with us partakers.

*Wal.*

Nay,

Madam, no more than from a trustless hand  
Protest and promise: of those twain that come  
Hot on these Frenchmen's heels in embassy, 275

He that in counsel on this cause was late  
One with my lord of Leicester now, to rid  
By draught of secret death this queen away,  
Bears charge to say as these gone hence have said  
In open audience, but by personal note 280

Hath given me this to know, that howsoe'er  
His king indeed desire her life be spared  
Much may be wrought upon him, would your  
grace

More richly line his ragged wants with gold  
And by full utterance of your parliament 285  
Approve him heir in England.

*Eliz.*

Ay! no more?

God's blood! what grace is proffered us at need,  
And on what mild conditions! Say I will not

Redeem such perils at so dear a price,  
Shall not our pensioner too join hands with France 290  
And pay my gold with iron barter back  
At edge of sword he dares not look upon,  
They tell us, for the scathe and scare he took  
Even in this woman's womb when shot and steel  
Undid the manhood in his veins unborn 295  
And left his tongue's threats handleless?

*Wal.*

Men there be

Your majesty must think, who bear but ill,  
For pride of country and high-heartedness,  
To see the king they serve your servant so  
That not his mother's life and once their queen's 300  
Being at such point of peril can enforce  
One warlike word of his for chance of war  
Conditional against you. Word came late  
From Edinburgh that there the citizens  
With hoot and hiss had bayed him through the  
streets 305

As he went heartless by; of whom they had heard  
This published saying, that in his personal mind  
The blood of kindred or affinity  
So much not binds us as the friendship pledged  
To them that are not of our blood: and this 310  
Stands clear for certain, that no breath of war  
Shall breathe from him against us though she die,  
Except his titular claim be reft from him  
On our succession: and that all his mind

Is but to reign unpartnered with a power 315  
 Which should weigh down that half his king-  
 dom's weight

Left to his hand's share nominally in hold :  
 And for his mother, this would he desire,  
 That she were kept from this day to her death  
 Close prisoner in one chamber, never more 320  
 To speak with man or woman : and hereon  
 That proclamation should be made of her  
 As of one subject formally declared  
 To the English law whereby, if she offend  
 Again with iterance of conspiracy, 325  
 She shall not as a queen again be tried,  
 But as your vassal and a private head  
 Live liable to the doom and stroke of death.

*Eliz.* She is bounden to him as he long since  
 to her,

Who would have given his kingdom up at least 330  
 To his dead father's slayer, in whose red hand  
 How safe had lain his life too doubt may guess,  
 Which yet kept dark her purpose then on him,  
 Dark now no more to usward. Think you then  
 That they belie him, whose suspicion saith 335  
 His ear and heart are yet inclined to Spain,  
 If from that brother-in-law that was of ours  
 And would have been our bridegroom he may win  
 Help of strange gold and foreign soldiership,  
 With Scottish furtherance of those Catholic lords 340

Who are stronger-spirited in their faith than ours,  
Being harried more of heretics, as they say,  
Than these within our borders, to root out  
The creed there stablished now, and do to death  
Its ministers, with all the lords their friends, 345  
Lay hands on all strong places there, and rule  
As prince upon their party? since he fain  
From ours would be divided, and cast in  
His lot with Rome against us too, from these  
Might he but earn assurance of their faith, 350  
Revolting from his own. May these things be  
More than mere muttering breath of trustless lies,  
And half his heart yet hover toward our side  
For all such hope or purpose?

*Wal.* Of his heart  
We know not, madam, surely; nor doth he 355  
Who follows fast on their first envoy sent,  
And writes to excuse him of his message here  
On her behalf apparent, but in sooth  
Aimed otherwise; the Master I mean of Gray,  
Who swears me here by letter, if he be not 360  
True to the queen of England, he is content  
To have his head fall on a scaffold: saying,  
To put from him this charge of embassy  
Had been his ruin, but the meaning of it  
Is modest and not menacing: whereto 365  
If you will yield not yet to spare the life  
So near its forfeit now, he thinks it well

You should be pleased by some commission given  
To stay by the way his comrade and himself,  
Or bid them back.

*Eliz.* What man is this then, sent 370  
With such a knave to fellow?

*Wal.* No such knave,  
But still your prisoner's friend of old time found:  
Sir Robert Melville.

*Eliz.* And an honest man  
As faith might wish her servants: but what pledge  
Will these produce me for security 375  
That I may spare this dangerous life and live  
Unscathed of after practice?

*Wal.* As I think,  
The king's self and his whole nobility  
Will be her personal pledges; and her son,  
If England yield her to his hand in charge, 380  
On no less strait a bond will undertake  
For her safe keeping.

*Eliz.* That were even to arm  
With double power mine adversary, and make him  
The stronger by my hand to do me hurt —  
Were he mine adversary indeed: which yet 385  
I will not hold him. Let them find a mean  
For me to live unhurt and save her life,  
It shall well please me. Say this king of Scots  
Himself would give his own inheritance up  
Pretended in succession, if but once 390

Her hand were found or any friend's of hers  
 Again put forth upon me for her sake,  
 Why, haply so might hearts be satisfied  
 Of lords and commons then to let her live.  
 But this I doubt he had rather take her life 395  
 Himself than yield up to us for pledge: and less,  
 These men shall know of me, I will not take  
 In price of her redemption: which were else,  
 And haply may in no wise not be held,  
 To this my loyal land and mine own trust 400  
 A deadlier stroke and blast of sound more dire  
 Than noise of fleets invasive.

*Wal.*

Surely so

Would all hearts hold it, madam, in that land  
 That are not enemies of the land and yours;  
 For ere the doom had been proclaimed an hour 405  
 Which gave to death your main foe's head and  
 theirs

Yourself have heard what fire of joy brake forth  
 From all your people: how their church-towers all  
 Rang in with jubilant acclaim of bells  
 The day that bore such tidings, and the night 410  
 That laughed aloud with lightning of their joy  
 And thundered round its triumph: twice twelve  
 hours

This tempest of thanksgiving roared and shone  
 Sheer from the Solway's to the Channel's foam  
 With light as from one festal-flaming hearth 415

And sound as of one trumpet : not a tongue  
 But praised God for it, or heart that leapt not up,  
 Save of your traitors and their country's : these  
 Withered at heart and shrank their heads in close,  
 As though the bright sun's were a basilisk's eye,<sup>420</sup>  
 And light, that gave all others comfort, flame  
 And smoke to theirs of hell's own darkness, whence  
 Such eyes were blinded or put out with fire.

*Eliz.* Yea, I myself, I mind me, might not sleep  
 Those twice twelve hours thou speak'st of. By  
 God's light,

425

Be it most in love of me or fear of her  
 I know not, but my people seems in sooth  
 Hot and an hungered on this trail of hers :  
 Nor is it a people bloody-minded, used  
 To lap the life up of an enemy's vein  
 Who bleeds to death unweaponed : our good  
 hounds

430

Will course a quarry soldierlike in war,  
 But rage not hangmanlike upon the prey,  
 To flesh their fangs on limbs that strive not : yet  
 Their hearts are hotter on this course than mine,<sup>435</sup>  
 Which most was deadliest aimed at.

*Wal.* Even for that  
 How should not theirs be hot as fire from hell  
 To burn your danger up and slay that soul  
 Alive that seeks it ? Thinks your majesty  
 There beats a heart where treason hath not turned<sup>440</sup>



All English blood to poison, which would feel  
No deadlier pang of dread more deathful to it  
To hear of yours endangered than to feel  
A sword against its own life bent, or know  
Death imminent as darkness overhead 445  
That takes the noon from one man's darkening  
eye

As must your death from all this people's? You  
Are very England : in your light of life  
This living land of yours walks only safe,  
And all this breathing people with your breath 450  
Breathes unenslaved, and draws at each pulse in  
Freedom : your eye is light of theirs, your word  
As God's to comfort England, whose whole soul  
Is made with yours one, and her witness you  
That Rome or hell shall take not hold on her 455  
Again till God be wroth with us so much  
As to reclaim for heaven the star that yet  
Lights all your land that looks on it, and gives  
Assurance higher than danger dares assail  
Save in this lady's name and service, who 460  
Must now from you take judgment.

*Eliz.* Must ! by God,  
I know not *must* but as a word of mine,  
My tongue's and not mine ear's familiar. Sirs,  
Content yourselves to know this much of us,  
Or having known remember, that we sent 465  
The Lord of Buckhurst and our servant Beale

To acquaint this queen our prisoner with the  
doom

Confirmed on second trial against her, saying  
Her word can weigh not down the weightier guilt  
Approved upon her, and by parliament 470

Since fortified with sentence. Yea, my lords,  
Ye should forget not how by message then  
I bade her know of me with what strong force  
Of strenuous and invincible argument  
I am urged to hold no more in such delay 475

The process of her execution, being  
The seed-plot of these late conspiracies,  
Their author and chief motive : and am told  
That if I yield not mine the guilt must be  
In God's and in the whole world's suffering sight 480  
Of all the miseries and calamities

To ensue on my refusal : whence, albeit  
I know not yet how God shall please to incline  
My heart on that behalf, I have thought it meet  
In conscience yet that she should be forewarned, 485  
That so she might bethink her of her sins  
Done both toward God offensive and to me  
And pray for grace to be true penitent  
For all these faults : which, had the main fault  
reached

No further than mine own poor person, God 490  
Stands witness with what truth my heart pro-  
tests

I freely would have pardoned. She to this  
 Makes bitter answer as of desperate heart  
 All we may wreak our worst upon her ; whom  
 Having to death condemned, we may fulfil 495  
 Our wicked work, and God in Paradise  
 With just atonement shall requite her. This  
 Ye see is all the pardon she will ask,  
 Being only, and even as 't were with prayer,  
                   desired

To crave of us forgiveness : and thereon 500  
 Being by Lord Buckhurst charged on this point  
                   home

That by her mean the Catholics here had learnt  
 To hold her for their sovereign, on which cause  
 Nor my religion nor myself might live  
 Uncharged with danger while her life should last, 505  
 She answering gives God thanks aloud to be  
 Held of so great account upon his side,  
 And in God's cause and in the church of God's  
 Rejoicingly makes offering of her life ;  
 Which I, God knows how unrejoicingly, 510  
 Can scarce, ye tell me, choose but take, or yield  
 At least for you to take it. Yet, being told  
 It is not for religion she must die,  
 But for a plot by compass of her own  
 Laid to dethrone me and destroy, she casts 515  
 Again this answer barbed with mockery back,  
 She was not so presumptuous born, to aspire

To two such ends yet ever : yea, so far  
She dwelt from such desire removed in heart,  
She would not have me suffer by her will 520  
The fillip of a finger : though herself  
Be persecuted even as David once  
And her mishap be that she cannot so  
Fly by the window forth as David : whence  
It seems she likens us to Saul, and looks 525  
Haply to see us as on Mount Gilboa fallen,  
Where yet, for all the shooters on her side,  
Our shield shall be not vilely cast away,  
As of one unanointed. Yet, my lords,  
If England might but by my death attain 530  
A state more flourishing with a better prince,  
Gladly would I lay down my life ; who have  
No care save only for my people's sake  
To keep it : for myself, in all the world  
I see no great cause why for all this coil 535  
I should be fond to live or fear to die.  
If I should say unto you that I mean  
To grant not your petition, by my faith,  
More should I so say haply than I mean :  
Or should I say I mean to grant it, this 540  
Were, as I think, to tell you of my mind  
More than is fit for you to know : and thus  
I must for all petitionary prayer  
Deliver you an answer answerless.  
Yet will I pray God lighten my dark mind 545

That being illumined it may thence foresee  
 What for his church and all this commonwealth  
 May most be profitable: and this once known,  
 My hand shall halt not long behind his will.

SCENE II. — *Fotheringay.*

*Sir Amyas Paulet and Sir Drew Drury.*

*Paulet.* I never gave God heartier thanks than  
 these

I give to have you partner of my charge  
 Now most of all, these letters being to you  
 No less designed than me, and you in heart  
 One with mine own upon them. Certainly, 5  
 When I put hand to pen this morning past  
 That Master Davison by mine evidence  
 Might note what sore disquietudes I had  
 To increase my griefs before of body and mind,  
 I looked for no such word to cut off mine 10  
 As these to us both of Walsingham's and his.  
 Would rather yet I had cause to still complain  
 Of those unanswered letters two months past  
 Than thus be certified of such intents  
 As God best knoweth I never sought to know, 15  
 Or search out secret causes: though to hear  
 Nothing at all did breed, as I confessed,  
 In me some hard conceits against myself,  
 I had rather yet rest ignorant than ashamed



And wring that warrant from her hovering hand  
Which falters yet and flutters on her lip 45  
While the hand hangs and trembles half ad-  
vanced

Upon that sentence which, the treasurer said,  
Should well ere this have spoken, seeing it was  
More than a full month old and four days more  
When he so looked to hear the word of it 50  
Which yet lies sealed of silence.

*Paul.* Will you say,  
Or any as wise and loyal, say or think  
It was but for a show, to scare men's wits,  
They have raised this hue and cry upon her flight  
Supposed from hence, to waken Exeter 55  
With noise from Honiton and Sampfield spread  
Of proclamation to detain all ships  
And lay all highways for her day and night,  
And send like precepts out four manner of ways  
From town to town, to make in readiness 60  
Their armour and artillery, with all speed,  
On pain of death, for London by report  
Was set on fire? though, God be therefore  
praised,  
We know this is not, yet the noise hereof  
Were surely not to be neglected, seeing 65  
There is, meseems, indeed no readier way  
To levy forces for the achieving that  
Which so these lewd reporters feign to fear.

*Drury.* Why, in such mighty matters and such  
mists

Wise men may think what hardly fools would say, 70  
And eyes get glimpse of more than sight hath  
leave

To give commission for the babbling tongue  
Aloud to cry they have seen. This noise that was  
Upon one Arden's flight, a traitor, whence  
Fear flew last week all round us, gave but note 75  
How lightly may men's minds take fire, and words  
Take wing that have no feet to fare upon  
More solid than a shadow.

*Paul.* Nay, he was  
Escaped indeed: and every day thus brings  
Forth its new mischief: as this last month did 80  
Those treasons of the French ambassador  
Designed against our mistress, which God's grace  
Laid by the knave's mean bare to whom they  
sought

For one to slay her, and of the Pope's hand earn  
Ten thousand blood-encrusted crowns a year 85  
To his most hellish hire. You will not say  
This too was merely fraud or vision wrought  
By fear or cloudy falsehood?

*Drury.* I will say  
No more or surelier than I know: and this  
I know not thoroughly to the core of truth 90  
Or heart of falsehood in it. A man may lie



Merely, or trim some bald lean truth with lies,  
Or patch bare falsehood with some tatter of truth,  
And each of these pass current : but of these  
Which likeliest may this man's tale be who gave 95  
Word of his own temptation by these French  
To hire them such a murderer, and avowed  
He held it godly cunning to comply  
And bring this envoy's secretary to sight  
Of one clapped up for debts in Newgate, who 100  
Being thence released might readily, as he said,  
Even by such means as once this lady's lord  
Was made away with, make the queen away  
With powder fired beneath her bed — why, this,  
Good sooth, I guess not ; but I doubt the man 105  
To be more liar than fool, and yet, God wot,  
More fool than traitor ; most of all intent  
To conjure coin forth of the Frenchman's purse  
With tricks of mere effrontery : thus at least  
We know did Walsingham esteem of him : 110  
And if by Davison held of more account,  
Or merely found more serviceable, and made  
A mean to tether up those quick French tongues  
From threat or pleading for this prisoner's life,  
I cannot tell, and care not. Though the queen 115  
Hath stayed this envoy's secretary from flight  
Forth of the kingdom, and committed him  
To ward within the Tower while Châteauneuf  
Himself should come before a council held

At my lord treasurer's, where being thus accused 120  
At first he cared not to confront the man,  
But stood upon his office, and the charge  
Of his king's honour and prerogative —  
Then bade bring forth the knave, who being  
brought forth

Outfaced him with insistence front to front 125  
And took the record of this whole tale's truth  
Upon his soul's damnation, challenging  
The Frenchman's answer in denial hereof,  
That of his own mouth had this witness been  
Traitorously tempted, and by personal plea 130  
Directly drawn to treason: which awhile  
Struck dumb the ambassador as amazed with  
wrath,

Till presently, the accuser being removed,  
He made avowal this fellow some while since  
Had given his secretary to wit there lay 135  
One bound in Newgate who being thence released  
Would take the queen's death on his hand:  
whereto

Answering, he bade the knave avoid his house  
On pain, if once their ways should cross, to be  
Sent bound before the council: who replied 140  
He had done foul wrong to take no further note,  
But being made privy to this damned device  
Keep close its perilous knowledge; whence the  
queen

Might well complain against him ; and hereon  
They fell to wrangling on this cause, that he 145  
Professed himself to no man answerable  
For declaration or for secret held  
Save his own master : so that now is gone  
Sir William Wade to Paris, not with charge  
To let the king there know this queen shall live, 150  
But to require the ambassador's recall  
And swift delivery of our traitors there  
To present justice : yet may no man say,  
For all these half-faced scares and policies,  
Here was more sooth than seeming.

*Paul.* Why, these crafts 155  
Were shameful then as fear's most shameful self,  
If thus your wit read them aright ; and we  
Should for our souls and lives alike do ill  
To jeopard them on such men's surety given  
As make no more account of simple faith 160  
Than true men make of liars : and these are they,  
Our friends and masters, that rebuke us both  
By speech late uttered of her majesty  
For lack of zeal in service and of care  
She looked for at our hands, in that we have not 165  
In all this time, unprompted, of ourselves  
Found out some way to cut this queen's life off,  
Seeing how great peril, while her enemy lives,  
She is hourly subject unto : saying, she notes,  
Besides a kind of lack of love to her, 170

Herein we have not that particular care  
Forsooth of our own safeties, or indeed  
Of the faith rather and the general good,  
That politic reason bids; especially,  
Having so strong a warrant and such ground 175  
For satisfaction of our consciences  
To Godward, and discharge of credit kept  
And reputation toward the world, as is  
That oath whereby we stand associated  
To prosecute inexorably to death 180  
Both with our joint and our particular force  
All by whose hand and all on whose behalf  
Our sovereign's life is struck at: as by proof  
Stands charged upon our prisoner. So they write,  
As though the queen's own will had warranted 185  
The words that by her will's authority  
Were blotted from the bond, whereby that head  
Was doomed on whose behoof her life should be  
By treason threatened: for she would not have  
Aught pass which grieved her subjects' con-  
sciences, 190  
She said, or might abide not openly  
The whole world's view: nor would she any one  
Were punished for another's fault: and so  
Cut off the plea whereon she now desires  
That we should dip our secret hands in blood 195  
With no direction given of her own mouth  
So to pursue that dangerous head to death

By whose assent her life were sought : for this  
Stands fixed for only warrant of such deed,  
And this we have not, but her word instead 200  
She takes it most unkindly toward herself  
That men professing toward her loyally  
That love that we do should in any sort,  
For lack of our own duty's full discharge,  
Cast upon her the burden, knowing as we 205  
Her slowness to shed blood, much more of one  
So near herself in blood as is this queen,  
And one with her in sex and quality.  
And these respects, they find, or so profess,  
Do greatly trouble her : who hath sundry times 210  
Protested, they assure us, earnestly,  
That if regard of her good subjects' risk  
Did not more move her than the personal fear  
Of proper peril to her, she never would  
Be drawn to assent unto this bloodshedding : 215  
And so to our good judgments they refer  
These speeches they thought meet to acquaint us  
with  
As passed but lately from her majesty,  
And to God's guard commend us : which God  
knows  
We should much more need than deserve of him 220  
Should we give ear to this, and as they bid  
Make heretics of these papers ; which three times  
You see how Davison hath enforced on us :

But they shall taste no fire for me, nor pass  
 Back to his hands till copies writ of them 225  
 Lie safe in mine for sons of mine to keep  
 In witness how their father dealt herein.

*Drury.* You have done the wiselier : and what  
 word soe'er

Shall bid them know your mind, I am well as-  
 sured

It well may speak for me too.

*Paul.* Thus it shall : 230

That having here his letters in my hands,  
 I would not fail, according to his charge,  
 To send back answer with all possible speed  
 Which shall deliver unto him my great grief  
 And bitterness of mind, in that I am 235

So much unhappy as I hold myself  
 To have lived to look on this unhappy day,  
 When I by plain direction am required  
 From my most gracious sovereign's mouth to do  
 An act which God forbiddeth, and the law. 240

Hers are my goods and livings, and my life,  
 Held at her disposition, and myself  
 Am ready so to lose them this next day  
 If it shall please her so, acknowledging  
 I hold them of her mere goodwill, and do not 245  
 Desire them to enjoy them but so long  
 As her great grace gives leave : but God forbid  
 That I should make for any grace of hers



*Paul.*

I

Will praise God's mercy most for this of all, 275  
 When I shall see the murderous cause removed  
 Of its most mortal peril : nor desire  
 A guerdon ampler from the queen we serve,  
 Besides her commendations of my faith  
 For spotless actions and for safe regards, 280  
 Than to see judgment on her enemy done ;  
 Which were for me that recompense indeed  
 Whereof she writes as one not given to all,  
 But for such merit reserved to crown its claim  
 Above all common service : nor save this 285  
 Could any treasure's promise in the world  
 So ease those travails and rejoice this heart  
 That hers too much takes thought of, as to read  
 Her charge to carry for her sake in it  
 This most just thought, that she can balance not 290  
 The value that her grace doth prize me at  
 In any weight of judgment : yet it were  
 A word to me more comfortable at heart  
 Than these, though these most gracious, that  
     should speak  
 Death to her death's contriver.

*Drury.*

Nay, myself 295

Were fain to see this coil wound up, and her  
 Removed that makes it : yet such things will  
     pluck  
 Hard at men's hearts that think on them, and move



Compassion that such long strange years should  
find

So strange an end : nor shall men ever say 300  
But she was born right royal ; full of sins,  
It may be, and by circumstance or choice  
Dyed and defaced with bloody stains and black,  
Unmerciful, unfaithful, but of heart  
So fiery high, so swift of spirit and clear, 305  
In extreme danger and pain so lifted up,  
So of all violent things inviolable,  
So large of courage, so superb of soul,  
So sheathed with iron mind invincible  
And arms unbreached of fireproof constancy — 310  
By shame not shaken, fear or force or death,  
Change, or all confluence of calamities —  
And so at her worst need beloved, and still,  
Naked of help and honour when she seemed,  
As other women would be, and of hope 315  
Stripped, still so of herself adorable  
By minds not always all ignobly mad  
Nor all made poisonous with false grain of faith,  
She shall be a world's wonder to all time,  
A deadly glory watched of marvelling men 320  
Not without praise, not without noble tears,  
And if without what she would never have  
Who had it never, pity — yet from none  
Quite without reverence and some kind of love  
For that which was so royal. Yea, and now 325

That at her prayer we here attend on her,  
 If, as I think, she have in mind to send  
 Aught written to the queen, what we may do  
 To further her desire shall on my part  
 Gladly be done, so be it the grace she craves 330  
 Be nought akin to danger.

*Paul.*

It shall be

The first of all then craved by her of man,  
 Or by man's service done her, that was found  
 So harmless ever.

*Enter Mary Stuart and Mary Beaton.*

*Mary Stuart.* Sirs, in time past by

I was desirous many times, ye know, 335  
 To have written to your queen: but since I have  
 had

Advertisement of my conviction, seeing  
 I may not look for life, my soul is set  
 On preparation for another world:  
 Yet none the less, not for desire of life, 340

But for my conscience's discharge and rest,  
 And for my last farewell, I have at heart  
 By you to send her a memorial writ

Of somewhat that concerns myself, when I  
 Shall presently be gone out of this world. 345

And to remove from her, if such be there,  
 Suspicion of all danger in receipt

Of this poor paper that should come from me,  
 Myself will take the assay of it, and so  
 With mine own hands to yours deliver it. 350

*Paul.* Will you not also, madam, be content  
To seal and close it in my presence up?

*Mary Stuart.* Sir, willingly: but I beseech  
your word

Pledged for its safe delivery to the queen.

*Paul.* I plight my faith it shall be sent to her. 355

*Mary Stuart.* This further promise I desire,  
you will

Procure me from above certificate  
It hath been there delivered.

*Drury.* This is more  
Than we may stand so pledged for: in our power  
It is to send, but far beyond our power, 360  
As being above our place, to promise you  
Certificate or warrant.

*Mary Stuart.* Yet I trust  
Consideration may be had of me  
After my death, as one derived in blood  
From your queen's grandsire, with all mortal rites 365  
According with that faith I have professed  
All my life-days as I was born therein.  
This is the sum of all mine askings: whence  
Well might I take it in ill part of you  
To wish me seal my letter in your sight, 370  
Bewraying your hard opinion of me.

*Paul.* This  
Your own words well might put into my mind,  
That so beside my expectation made

Proffer to take my first assay for me  
 Of the outer part of it : for you must think 375  
 I was not ignorant that by sleight of craft  
 There might be as great danger so conveyed  
 Within the letter as without, and thus  
 I could not for ill thoughts of you be blamed,  
 Concurring with you in this jealousy : 380  
 For had yourself not moved it of yourself  
 Sir Drew nor I had ever thought on it.

*Mary Stuart.* The occasion why I moved it  
 was but this,

That having made my custom in time past  
 To send sometimes some tokens to your queen, 385  
 At one such time that I sent certain clothes  
 One standing by advised her cause my gifts  
 To be tried thoroughly ere she touched them ;  
 which

I have since observed, and taken order thus  
 With Nau, when last he tarried at the court, 390  
 To do the like to a fur-fringed counterpane  
 Which at that time I sent : and as for this,  
 Look what great danger lies between these leaves  
 That I dare take and handle in my hands,  
 And press against my face each part of them 395  
 Held open thus, and either deadly side,  
 Wherein your fear smells death sown privily.

*Paul.* Madam, when so you charged your  
 secretary

Her majesty was far from doubt, I think,  
 Or dream of such foul dealing: and I would 400  
 Suspicion since had found no just cause given,  
 And then things had not been as now they are.

*Mary Stuart.* But things are as they are, and  
 here I stand

Convicted, and not knowing how many hours  
 I have to live yet.

*Paul.* Madam, you shall live 405  
 As many hours as God shall please: but this  
 May be said truly, that you here have been  
 Convicted in most honourable sort  
 And favourable.

*Mary Stuart.* What favour have I found?

*Paul.* Your cause hath been examined scrupu- 410  
 lously

By many our eldest nobles of this realm,  
 Whereas by law you should but have been tried  
 By twelve men as a common person.

*Mary Stuart.* Nay,  
 Your noblemen must by their peers be tried.

*Paul.* All strangers of what quality soe'er 415  
 In matter of crime are only to be tried  
 In other princes' territories by law  
 That in that realm bears rule.

*Mary Stuart.* You have your laws:  
 But other princes all will think of it  
 As they see cause; and mine own son is now 420

No more a child, but come to man's estate,  
And he will think of these things bitterly.

*Drury.* Ingratitude, whate'er he think of them,  
Is odious to all persons, but of all  
In mightiest personages most specially 425  
Most hateful; and it will not be denied  
But that the queen's grace greatly hath deserved  
Both of yourself and of your son.

*Mary Stuart.* What boon  
Shall I acknowledge? Being in bonds, I am set  
Free from the world, and therefore am I not 430  
Afraid to speak; I have had the favour here  
To have been kept prisoner now these many  
years  
Against my will and justice.

*Paul.* Madam, this  
Was a great favour, and without this grace  
You had not lived to see these days.

*Mary Stuart.* How so? 435

*Paul.* Seeing your own subjects did pursue  
you, and had  
The best in your own country.

*Mary Stuart.* That is true,  
Because your Mildmay's ill persuasions first  
Made me discharge my forces, and then caused  
Mine enemies to burn my friends' main holds, 440  
Castles and houses.

*Paul.* Howsoe'er, it was

By great men of that country that the queen  
 Had earnest suit made to her to have yourself  
 Delivered to them, which her grace denied,  
 And to their great misliking.

*Drury.* Seventeen years 445

She hath kept your life to save it: and whereas  
 She calls your highness sister, she hath dealt  
 In truth and deed most graciously with you  
 And sisterlike, in seeking to preserve  
 Your life at once and honour.

*Mary Stuart.* Ay! wherein? 450

*Drury.* In that commission of your causes  
 held

At York, which was at instance of your friends  
 Dissolved to save your honour.

*Mary Stuart.* No: the cause  
 Why that commission was dissolved indeed  
 Was that my friends could not be heard to in-  
 form 455

Against my loud accusers.

*Paul.* But your friend  
 The bishop's self of Ross, your very friend,  
 Hath written that this meeting was dismissed  
 All only in your favour: and his book  
 Is extant: and this favour is but one 460  
 Of many graces which her majesty  
 Hath for mere love extended to you.

*Mary Stuart.* This

Is one great favour, even to have kept me here  
So many years against my will.

*Paul.*

It was

For your own safety, seeing your countrymen 465  
Sought your destruction, and to that swift end  
Required to have you yielded up to them,  
As was before said.

*Mary Stuart.*

Nay, then, I will speak.

I am not afraid. It was determined here  
That I should not depart: and when I was 470  
Demanded by my subjects, this I know,  
That my lord treasurer with his own close hand  
Writ in a packet which by trustier hands  
Was intercepted, and to me conveyed,  
To the earl of Murray, that the devil was tied 475  
Fast in a chain, and they could keep her not,  
But here she should be safely kept.

*Drury.*

That earl

Was even as honourable a gentleman  
As I knew ever in that country bred.

*Mary Stuart.* One of the worst men of the  
world he was: 480

A foul adulterer, one of general lust,  
A spoiler and a murderer.

*Drury.*

Six weeks long,

As I remember, here I saw him; where  
He bore him very gravely, and maintained  
The reputation even on all men's tongues 485



In all things of a noble gentleman :  
Nor have I heard him evil spoken of  
Till this time ever.

*Mary Stuart.* Yea, my rebels here  
Are honest men, and by the queen have been  
Maintained.

*Paul.* You greatly do forget yourself 490  
To charge her highness with so foul a fault,  
Which you can never find ability  
To prove on her.

*Mary Stuart.* What did she with the French,  
I pray you, at Newhaven ?

*Paul.* It appears  
You have conceived so hardly of the queen 495  
My mistress, that you still inveterately  
Interpret all her actions to the worst,  
Not knowing the truth of all the cause : but yet  
I dare assure you that her majesty  
Had most just cause and righteous, in respect 500  
As well of Calais as for other ends,  
To do the thing she did, and more to have done  
Had it so pleased her to put forth her power :  
And this is in you great unthankfulness  
After so many favours and so great, 505  
Whereof you will acknowledge in no wise  
The least of any : though her majesty  
Hath of her own grace merely saved your life,  
To the utter discontentment of the best

Your subjects once in open parliament 510  
 Who craved against you justice on the charge  
 Of civil law-breach and rebellion.

*Mary Stuart.*

I

Know no such matter, but full well I know  
 Sir Francis Walsingham hath openly,  
 Since his abiding last in Scotland, said 515  
 That I should rue his entertainment there.

*Paul.* Madam, you have not rued it, but have  
 been

More honourably entertained than ever yet  
 Was any other crown's competitor  
 In any realm save only this: whereof 520  
 Some have been kept close prisoners, other some  
 Maimed and unnaturally disfigured, some  
 Murdered.

*Mary Stuart.*

But I was no competitor:

All I required was in successive right  
 To be reputed but as next the crown. 525

*Paul.* Nay, madam, you went further, when  
 you gave

The English arms and style, as though our queen  
 Had been but an usurper on your right.

*Mary Stuart.* My husband and my kinsmen  
 did therein

What they thought good: I had nought to do  
 with it. 530

*Paul.* Why would you not then loyally renounce

Your claim herein pretended, but with such  
Condition, that you might be authorized  
Next heir apparent to the crown?

*Mary Stuart.* I have made  
At sundry times thereon good proffers, which 535  
Could never be accepted.

*Paul.* Heretofore  
It hath been proved unto you presently  
That in the very instant even of all  
Your treaties and most friendlike offers were  
Some dangerous crafts discovered.

*Mary Stuart.* You must think 540  
I have some friends on earth, and if they have  
done  
Anything privily, what is that to me?

*Paul.* Madam, it was somewhat to you, and  
I would  
For your own sake you had forborne it, that  
After advertisement and conscience given 545  
Of Morgan's devilish practice, to have killed  
A sacred queen, you yet would entertain  
The murderer as your servant.

*Mary Stuart.* I might do it  
With as good right as ever did your queen  
So entertain my rebels.

*Drury.* Be advised: 550  
This speech is very hard, and all the case  
Here differs greatly.

*Mary Stuart.* Yea, let this then be ;  
 Ye cannot yet of my conviction say  
 But I by partial judgment was condemned,  
 And the commissioners knew my son could have 555  
 No right, were I convicted, and your queen  
 Could have no children of her womb ; whereby  
 They might set up what man for king they would.

*Paul.* This is in you too great forgetfulness  
 Of honour and yourself, to charge these lords 560  
 With two so foul and horrible faults, as first  
 To take your life by partial doom from you,  
 And then bestow the kingdom where they liked.

*Mary Stuart.* Well, all is one to me : and for  
 my part  
 I thank God I shall die without regret 565  
 Of anything that I have done alive.

*Paul.* I would entreat you yet be sorry at least  
 For the great wrong, and well deserving grief,  
 You have done the queen my mistress.

*Mary Stuart.* Nay, thereon  
 Let others answer for themselves : I have 570  
 Nothing to do with it. Have you borne in mind  
 Those matters of my monies that we last  
 Conferred upon together ?

*Paul.* Madam, these  
 Are not forgotten.

*Mary Stuart.* Well it is if aught  
 Be yet at all remembered for my good. 575

Have here my letter sealed and superscribed,  
And so farewell — or even as here men may.

*Exeunt Paulet and Drury.*

Had I that old strength in my weary limbs  
That in my heart yet fails not, fain would I  
Fare forth if not fare better. Tired I am, 580

But not so lame in spirit I might not take  
Some comfort of the winter-wasted sun  
This bitter Christmas to me, though my feet  
Were now no firmer nor more hopeful found  
Than when I went but in my chair abroad 585

Last weary June at Chartley. I can stand  
And go now without help of either side,  
And bend my hand again, thou seest, to write :  
I did not well perchance in sight of these  
To have made so much of this lame hand, which  
yet 590

God knows was grievous to me, and to-day  
To make my letter up and superscribe  
And seal it with no outward show of pain  
Before their face and inquisition ; yet  
I care not much in player's wise piteously 595  
To blind such eyes with feigning : though this

Drew

Be gentler and more gracious than his mate  
And liker to be wrought on ; but at last  
What need have I of men ?

*Mary Beaton.*

What then you may

I know not, seeing for all that was and is 600  
 We are yet not at the last ; but when you had,  
 You have hardly failed to find more help of them  
 And heartier service than more prosperous queens  
 Exact of expectation : when your need  
 Was greater than your name or natural state, 605  
 And wage was none to look for but of death,  
 As though the expectancy thereof and hope  
 Were more than man's prosperities, men have  
 given  
 Heart's thanks to have this gift of God and you  
 For dear life's guerdon, even the trust assured 610  
 To drink for you the bitterness of death.

*Mary Stuart.* Ay, one said once it must be —  
 some one said

I must be perilous ever, and my love  
 More deadly than my will was evil or good  
 Toward any of all these that through me should  
 die 615  
 I know not who, nor when one said it : but  
 I know too sure he lied not.

*Mary Beaton.* No ; I think  
 This was a seer indeed. I have heard of men  
 That under imminence of death grew strong  
 With mortal foresight, yet in life-days past 620  
 Could see no foot before them, nor provide  
 For their own fate or fortune anything  
 Against one angry chance of accident

Or passionate fault of their own loves or hates  
That might to death betray them : such an one <sup>625</sup>  
Thus haply might have prophesied, and had  
No strength to save himself.

*Mary Stuart.* I know not : yet  
Time was when I remembered.

*Mary Beaton.* It should be  
No enemy's saying whom you remember not ;  
You are wont not to forget your enemies ; yet <sup>630</sup>  
The word rang sadder than a friend's should fall  
Save in some strange pass of the spirit of flesh  
For love's sake haply hurt to death.

*Mary Stuart.* It seems  
Thy mind is bent to know the name of me  
That of myself I know not.

*Mary Beaton.* Nay, my mind <sup>635</sup>  
Has other thoughts to beat upon : for me  
It may suffice to know the saying for true  
And never care who said it.

*Mary Stuart.* True ? too sure,  
God to mine heart's grief hath approved it. See,  
Nor Scot nor Englishman that takes on him <sup>640</sup>  
The service of my sorrow but partakes  
The sorrow of my service : man by man,  
As that one said, they perish of me : yea,  
Were I a sword sent upon earth, or plague  
Bred of aerial poison, I could be <sup>645</sup>  
No deadlier where unwillingly I strike,

Who where I would can hurt not : Percy died  
 By his own hand in prison, Howard by law,  
 These young men with strange torments done to  
 death,

Who should have rid me and the world of her 650  
 That is our scourge, and to the church of God  
 A pestilence that wastes it : all the north  
 Wears yet the scars engraven of civil steel  
 Since its last rising : nay, she saith but right,  
 Mine enemy, saying by these her servile tongues 655  
 I have brought upon her land mine own land's  
 curse,

And a sword follows at my heel, and fire  
 Is kindled of mine eyeshot : and before,  
 Whom did I love that died not of it ? whom  
 That I would save might I deliver, when 660  
 I had once but looked on him with love, or pledged  
 Friendship ? I should have died I think long since,  
 That many might have died not, and this word  
 Had not been written of me nor fulfilled,  
 But perished in the saying, a prophecy 665  
 That took the prophet by the throat and slew —  
 As sure I think it slew him. Such a song  
 Might my poor servant slain before my face  
 Have sung before the stroke of violent death  
 Had fallen upon him there for my sake.

*Mary Beaton.*

Ah ! 670

You think so ? this remembrance was it not



That hung and hovered in your mind but now,  
 Moved your heart backward all unwittingly  
 To some blind memory of the man long dead?

*Mary Stuart.* In sooth, I think my prophet  
 should have been

675

David.

*Mary Beaton.* You thought of him?

*Mary Stuart.* An old sad thought:

The moan of it was made long since, and he  
 Not unremembered.

*Mary Beaton.* Nay, of him indeed  
 Record was made — a royal record: whence  
 No marvel is it that you forgot not him.

680

*Mary Stuart.* I would forget no friends nor  
 enemies: these

More needsmenowremember. Think'stthou not  
 This woman hates me deadlier — or this queen  
 That is not woman — than myself could hate  
 Except I were as she in all things? then

685

I should love no such woman as am I  
 Much more than she may love me: yet I am sure,  
 Or so near surety as all belief may be,

She dare not slay me for her soul's sake: nay,  
 Though that were made as light of as a leaf  
 Storm-shaken, in such stormy winds of state

690

As blow between us like a blast of death,  
 For her throne's sake she durst not, which must be  
 Broken to build my scaffold. Yet, God wot,

Perchance a straw's weight now cast in by chance 695  
Might weigh my life down in the scale her hand  
Holds hardly straight for trembling: if she be  
Woman at all, so tempered naturally  
And with such spirit and sense as thou and I,  
Should I for wrath so far forget myself 700  
As these men sometime charge me that I do,  
My tongue might strike my head off. By this head  
That yet I wear to swear by, if life be  
Thankworthy, God might well be thanked for  
this

Of me or whoso loves me in the world, 705  
That I spake never half my heart out yet,  
For any sore temptation of them all,  
To her or hers; nor ever put but once  
My heart upon my paper, writing plain  
The things I thought, heard, knew for truth of her, 710  
Believed or feigned — nay, feigned not to believe  
Of her fierce follies fed with wry-mouthed praise,  
And that vain ravin of her sexless lust  
Which could not feed nor hide its hunger, curb  
With patience nor allay with love the thirst 715  
That mocked itself as all mouths mocked it. Ha,  
What might the reading of these truths have  
wrought

Within her maiden mind, what seed have sown,  
Trow'st thou, in her sweet spirit, of revenge  
Toward me that showed her queenship in the glass 720

A subject's hand of hers had put in mine  
 The likeness of it loathed and laughable  
 As they that worshipped it with words and signs  
 Beheld her and bemocked her ?

*Mary Beaton.* Certainly,  
 I think that soul drew never breath alive 725  
 To whom this letter might seem pardonable  
 Which timely you forbore to send her.

*Mary Stuart.* Nay,  
 I doubt not I did well to keep it back —  
 And did not ill to write it : for God knows  
 It was no small ease to my heart.

*Mary Beaton.* But say 730  
 I had not burnt it as you bade me burn,  
 But kept it privily safe against a need  
 That I might haply sometime have of it ?

*Mary Stuart.* What, to destroy me ?

*Mary Beaton.* Hardly, sure, to save.

*Mary Stuart.* Why shouldst thou think to  
 bring me to my death ? 735

*Mary Beaton.* Indeed, no man am I that love  
 you ; nor  
 Need I go therefore in such fear of you  
 As of my mortal danger.

*Mary Stuart.* On my life  
 (Long life or short, with gentle or violent end,  
 I know not, and would choose not, though I might 740  
 So take God's office on me), one that heard

Would swear thy speech had in it, and subtly  
mixed,

A savour as of menace, or a sound  
As of an imminent ill or perilous sense  
Which was not in thy meaning.

*Mary Beaton.* No: in mine 745

There lurked no treason ever; nor have you  
Cause to think worse of me than loyally,  
If proof may be believed on witness.

*Mary Stuart.* Sure,

I think I have not nor I should not have:  
Thy life has been the shadow cast of mine, 750

A present faith to serve my present need,  
A foot behind my footsteps; as long since  
In those French dances that we trod, and laughed  
The blithe way through together. Thou couldst  
sing

Then, and a great while gone it is by this 755

Since I heard song or music: I could now  
Find in my heart to bid thee, as the Jews  
Were once bid sing in their captivity  
One of their songs of Sion, sing me now,  
If one thou knowest, for love of that far time, 760  
One of our songs of Paris.

*Mary Beaton.* Give me leave

A little to cast up some wandering words  
And gather back such memories as may beat  
About my mind of such a song, and yet

I think I might renew some note long dumb 765  
 That once your ear allowed of. — (*Aside.*) I did  
 pray,

Tempt me not, God : and by her mouth again  
 He tempts me — nay, but prompts me, being  
 most just,

To know by trial if all remembrance be  
 Dead as remorse or pity that in birth 770  
 Died, and were childless in her : if she quite

Forget that very swan-song of thy love,  
 My love that wast, my love that wouldst not be,  
 Let God forget her now at last as I

Remember : if she think but one soft thought, 775  
 Cast one poor word upon thee, God thereby  
 Shall surely bid me let her live : if none,  
 I shoot that letter home and sting her dead.

God strengthen me to sing but these words  
 through

Though I fall dumb at end for ever. Now — 780  
*She sings.*

Après tant de jours, après tant de pleurs,  
 Soyez secourable à mon âme en peine.  
 Voyez comme Avril fait l'amour aux fleurs ;  
 Dame d'amour, dame aux belles couleurs,  
 Dieu vous a fait belle, Amour vous fait reine. 785

Rions, je t'en prie ; aimons, je le veux.  
 Le temps fuit et rit et ne revient guère  
 Pour baiser le bout de tes blonds cheveux,  
 Pour baiser tes cils, ta bouche et tes yeux ;  
 L'amour n'a qu'un jour auprès de sa mère. 790

*Mary Stuart.* Nay, I should once have known  
 that song, thou say'st,  
 And him that sang it and should now be dead :  
 Was it — but his rang sweeter — was it not  
 Remy Belleau ?

*Mary Beaton.* (My letter—here at heart !)  
*Aside.*

I think it might be — were it better writ 795  
 And courtlier phrased, with Latin spice cast in,  
 And a more tunable descant.

*Mary Stuart.* Ay ; how sweet  
 Sang all the world about those stars that sang  
 With Ronsard for the strong mid star of all,  
 His bay-bound head all glorious with grey hairs, 800  
 Who sang my birth and bridal ! When I think  
 Of those French years, I only seem to see  
 A light of swords and singing, only hear  
 Laughter of love and lovely stress of lutes,  
 And in between the passion of them borne 805  
 Sound of swords crossing ever, as of feet  
 Dancing, and life and death still equally  
 Blithe and bright-eyed from battle. Haply now  
 My sometime sister, mad Queen Madge, is grown  
 As grave as I should be, and wears at waist 810  
 No hearts of last year's lovers any more  
 Enchased for jewels round her girdlestead,  
 But rather beads for penitence ; yet I doubt  
 Time should not more abash her heart than mine,

Who live not heartless yet. These days like  
those 815

Have power but for a season given to do  
No more upon our spirits than they may,  
And what they may we know not till it be  
Done, and we need no more take thought of it,  
As I no more of death or life to-day. 820

*Mary Beaton.* That shall you surely need not.

*Mary Stuart.* So I think,  
Our keepers being departed : and by these,  
Even by the uncourtlier as the gentler man,  
I read as in a glass their queen's plain heart,  
And that by her at last I shall not die. 825

SCENE III. — *Greenwich Palace.*

*Queen Elizabeth and Davison.*

*Elizabeth.* Thou hast seen Lord Howard? I  
bade him send thee.

*Davison.* Madam,

But now he came upon me hard at hand  
And by your gracious message bade me in.

*Eliz.* The day is fair as April : hast thou been  
Abroad this morning? 'Tis no winter's sun 5  
That makes these trees forget their nakedness  
And all the glittering ground, as 't were in hope,  
Breathe laughingly.

*Dav.* Indeed, the gracious air

Had drawn me forth into the park, and thence  
Comes my best speed to attend upon your grace. 10

*Eliz.* My grace is not so gracious as the sun  
That graces thus the late distempered air :  
And you should oftener use to walk abroad,  
Sir, than your custom is : I would not have  
Good servants heedless of their natural health 15  
To do me sickly service. It were strange  
That one twice bound as woman and as queen  
To care for good men's lives and loyalties  
Should prove herself toward either dangerous.

*Dav.* That  
Can be no part of any servant's fear 20  
Who lives for service of your majesty.

*Eliz.* I would not have it be — God else forbid —  
Who have so loyal servants as I hold  
All now that bide about me : for I will not  
Think, though such villainy once were in men's  
minds, 25

That twice among mine English gentlemen  
Shall hearts be found so foul as theirs who thought,  
When I was horsed for hunting, to waylay  
And shoot me through the back at unawares  
With poisoned bullets : nor, thou knowest,  
would I, 30  
When this was opened to me, take such care,  
Ride so fenced round about with iron guard,



Or walk so warily as men counselled me  
For loyal fear of what thereafter might  
More prosperously be plotted : nay, God knows, 35  
I would not hold on such poor terms my life,  
With such a charge upon it, as to breathe  
In dread of death or treason till the day  
That they should stop my trembling breath, and  
ease

The piteous heart that panted like a slave's 40  
Of all vile fear for ever. So to live  
Were so much hatefuller than thus to die,  
I do not think that man or woman draws  
Base breath of life the loathsomest on earth  
Who by such purchase of perpetual fear 45  
And deathless doubt of all in trust of none  
Would shudderingly prolong it.

*Dav.* Even too well  
Your servants know that greatness of your heart  
Which gives you yet unguarded to men's eyes,  
And were unworthier found to serve or live 50  
Than is the unworthiest of them, did not this  
Make all their own hearts hotter with desire  
To be the bulwark or the price of yours  
Paid to redeem it from the arrest of death.

*Eliz.* So haply should they be whose hearts  
beat true 55  
With loyal blood : but whoso says they are  
Is but a loving liar.

*Dav.* I trust your grace  
Hath in your own heart no such doubt of them  
As speaks in mockery through your lips.

*Eliz.* By God,  
I say much less than righteous truth might  
speak

Of their loud loves that ring with emptiness,  
And hollow-throated loyalties whose heart  
Is wind and clamorous promise. Ye desire,  
With all your souls ye swear that ye desire  
The queen of Scots were happily removed, 60  
And not a knave that loves me will put hand  
To the enterprise ye look for only of me  
Who only would forbear it.

*Dav.* If your grace  
Be minded yet it shall be done at all,  
The way that were most honourable and just 70  
Were safest, sure, and best.

*Eliz.* I dreamt last night  
Our murderess there in hold had tasted death  
By execution of the sentence done  
That was pronounced upon her; and the news  
So stung my heart with wrath to hear of it 75  
That had I had a sword—look to 't, and 'ware! —  
I had thrust it through thy body.

*Dav.* God defend!  
'T was well I came not in your highness' way  
While the hot mood was on you. But indeed

I would know soothly if your mind be changed 80  
From its late root of purpose.

*Eliz.* No, by God :  
But I were fain it could be somewise done  
And leave the blame not on me. And so much,  
If there were love and honesty in one  
Whom I held faithful and exact of care, 85  
Should easily be performed ; but here I find  
This dainty fellow so precise a knave  
As will take all things dangerous on his tongue  
And nothing on his hand : hot-mouthed and large  
In zeal to stuff mine ears with promises, 90  
But perjurous in performance : did he not  
Set hand among you to the bond whereby  
He is bound at utmost hazard of his life  
To do me such a service ? Yet I could  
Have wrought as well without him, had I wist 95  
Of this faint falsehood in his heart : there is  
That Wingfield whom thou wot'st of, would  
have done  
With glad goodwill what I required of him,  
And made no Puritan mouths on 't.

*Dav.* Madam, yet  
Far better were it all should but be done 100  
By line of law and judgment.

*Eliz.* There be men  
Wiser than thou that see this otherwise.

*Dav.* All is not wisdom that of wise men  
comes,

Nor are all eyes that search the ways of state  
Clear as a just man's conscience.

*Eliz.* Proverbs ! ha ? 105

Who made thee master of these sentences,  
Prime tongue of ethics and philosophy ?

*Dav.* An honest heart to serve your majesty ;  
Nought else nor subtler in its reach of wit  
Than very simpleness of meaning.

*Eliz.* Nay, 110

I do believe thee ; heartily I do.  
Did my lord admiral not desire thee bring  
The warrant for her execution ?

*Dav.* Ay,

Madam ; here is it.

*Eliz.* I would it might not be,  
Or being so just were yet not necessary. 115  
Art thou not heartily sorry — wouldst thou not,  
I say, be sad — to see me sign it ?

*Dav.* Madam,

I grieve at any soul's mishap that lives,  
And specially for shipwreck of a life  
To you so near allied : but seeing this doom 120  
Wrung forth from justice by necessity,  
I had rather guilt should bleed than innocence.

*Eliz.* When I shall sign, take thou this in-  
stantly

To the lord chancellor ; see it straight be sealed  
As quietly as he may, not saying a word, 125

That no man come to know it untimely : then  
 Send it to the earls of Kent and Shrewsbury  
 Who are here set down to see this justice done :  
 I would no more be troubled with this coil  
 Till all be through. But, for the place of doom, 130  
 The hall there of the castle, in my mind,  
 Were fitter than the court or open green.  
 And as thou goest betake thee on thy way  
 To Walsingham, where he lies sick at home,  
 And let him know what hath of us been done : 135  
 Whereof the grief, I fear me, shall go near  
 To kill his heart outright.

*Dav.*

Your majesty

Hath yet not signed the warrant.

*Eliz.*

Ha ! God's blood

Art thou from tutor of philosophy late  
 Grown counsellor too and more than counsellor, 140  
 To appoint me where and what this hand of  
 mine

Shall at thy beck obsequiously subscribe  
 And follow on thy finger ? By God's death,  
 What if it please me now not sign at all ?  
 This letter of my kinswoman's last writ 145  
 Hath more compulsion in it, and more power  
 To enforce my pity, than a thousand tongues  
 Dictating death against her in mine ear  
 Of mine own vassal subjects. Here but now  
 She writes me she thanks God with all her heart 150

That it hath pleased him by the mean of me  
 To make an end of her life's pilgrimage,  
 Which hath been weary to her: and doth not  
 ask

To see its length drawn longer, having had  
 Too much experience of its bitterness: 155

But only doth entreat me, since she may  
 Look for no favour at their zealous hands  
 Who are first in councils of my ministry,  
 That only I myself will grant her prayers;  
 Whereof the first is, since she cannot hope 160

For English burial with such Catholic rites  
 As here were used in time of the ancient kings,  
 Mine ancestors and hers, and since the tombs  
 Lie violated in Scotland of her sires,  
 That so soon ever as her enemies 165

Shall with her innocent blood be satiated,  
 Her body by her servants may be borne  
 To some ground consecrated, there to be  
 Interred: and rather, she desires, in France,  
 Where sleep her honoured mother's ashes; so 170

At length may her poor body find the rest  
 Which living it has never known: thereto,  
 She prays me, from the fears she hath of those  
 To whose harsh hand I have abandoned her,  
 She may not secretly be done to death, 175  
 But in her servants' sight and others', who  
 May witness her obedience kept and faith

To the true church, and guard her memory safe  
From slanders haply to be blown abroad  
Concerning her by mouths of enemies: last, 180  
She asks that her attendants, who so well  
And faithfully through all her miseries past  
Have served her, may go freely where they  
please,

And lose not those small legacies of hers  
Which poverty can yet bequeath to them. 185

This she conjures me by the blood of Christ,  
Our kinship, and my grandsire's memory,  
Who was her father's grandsire and a king,  
And by the name of queen she bears with her  
Even to the death, that I will not refuse, 190  
And that a word in mine own hand may thus  
Assure her, who will then as she hath lived  
Die mine affectionate sister and prisoner. See,  
Howe'er she have sinned, what heart were mine,  
if this

Drew no tears from me: not the meanest soul 195  
That lives most miserable but with such words  
Must needs draw down men's pity.

*Dav.* Sure it is,  
This queen hath skill of writing: and her hand  
Hath manifold eloquence with various voice  
To express discourse of sirens or of snakes, 200  
A mermaid's or a monster's, uttering best  
All music or all malice. Here is come

A letter writ long since of hers to you  
 From Sheffield Castle, which for shame or fear  
 She durst not or she would not thence despatch, 205  
 Sent secretly to me from Fotheringay,  
 Not from her hand, but with her own hand writ,  
 So foul of import and malignity  
 I durst not for your majesty's respect  
 With its fierce infamies afire from hell 210  
 Offend your gracious eyesight : but because  
 Your justice by your mercy's ignorant hand  
 Hath her fair eyes put out, and walks now blind  
 Even by the pit's edge deathward, pardon me  
 If what you never should have seen be shown 215  
 By hands that rather would take fire in hand  
 Than lay in yours this writing.

*Gives her a letter.*

*Eliz.* By this light,  
 Whate'er be here, thou hadst done presumptu-  
 ously,  
 And Walsingham thy principal, to keep  
 Aught from mine eyes that being to me designed 220  
 Might even with most offence enlighten them.  
 Here is her hand indeed ; and she takes up  
*Reading.*

In gracious wise enough the charge imposed  
 By promise on her and desire of ours,  
 How loth soe'er she be, regretfully 225  
 To bring such things in question of discourse



Yet with no passion but sincerity,  
 As God shall witness her, declares to us  
 What our good lady of Shrewsbury said to her  
 Touching ourself in terms ensuing; whereto 230  
 Answering she chid this dame for such belief  
 And reprehended for licentious tongue  
 To speak so lewdly of us: which herself  
 Believes not, knowing the woman's natural heart  
 And evil will as then to usward. Here 235  
 She writes no more than I would well believe  
 Of her as of the countess. Ha!

*Dav.* Your grace  
 Shall but defile and vex your eyes and heart  
 To read these villainies through.

*Eliz.* God's death, man! peace:  
 Thou wert not best incense me toward thine own, 240  
 Whose eyes have been before me in them. What!  
 Was she not mad to write this? *One that had*  
*Your promise — lay with you times numberless —*  
*All license and all privateness that may*  
*Be used of wife and husband!* yea, of her 245  
 And more dead men than shame remembers. *God*  
*Shall stand her witness — with the devil of hell*  
 For sponsor to her vows, whose spirit in her  
 Begot himself this issue. Ha, the duke!  
 — Nay, God shall give me patience — and his  
     knave, 250  
 And Hatton — God have mercy! nay, but hate,

Hate and constraint and rage have wrecked her  
wits,

And continence of life cut off from lust,  
— This common stale of Scotland, that has tried  
The sins of three rank nations, and consumed 255  
Their veins whose life she took not — Italy,  
France that put half this poison in her blood,  
And her own kingdom that being sick therewith  
Vomited out on ours the venomous thing  
Whose head we set not foot on — but may God 260  
Make my fame fouler through the world than hers  
And ranker in men's record, if I spare  
The she-wolf that I saved, the woman-beast,  
Wolf-woman — how the Latin rings we know,  
And what lewd lair first reared her, and whose  
hand 265

Writ broad across the Louvre and Holyrood  
*Lupanar* — but no brothel ever bred  
Or breathed so rank a soul's infection, spawned  
Or spat such foulness in God's face and man's  
Or festered in such falsehood as her breath 270  
Strikes honour sick with, and the spirit of shame  
Dead as her fang shall strike herself, and send  
The serpent that corruption calls her soul  
To vie strange venoms with the worm of hell  
And make the face of darkness and the grave 275  
Blush hotter with the fires wherein that soul  
Sinks deeper than damnation.

*Dav.* Let your grace  
Think only that but now the thing is known  
And self-discovered which too long your love  
Too dangerously hath cherished; and forget 280  
All but that end which yet remains for her,  
That right by pity be not overcome.

*Eliz.* God pity so my soul as I do right,  
And show me no more grace alive or dead  
Than I do justice here. Give me again 285  
That warrant I put by, being foolish: yea,  
Thy word spake sooth — my soul's eyes were  
put out —

I could not see for pity. Thou didst well —  
I am bounden to thee heartily — to cure  
My sight of this distemper, and my soul. 290  
Here in God's sight I set mine hand, who thought  
Never to take this thing upon it, nor  
Do God so bitter service. Take this hence:  
And let me see no word nor hear of her  
Till the sun see not such a soul alive. 295

END OF THE FOURTH ACT



ACT V

MARY STUART



## ACT V.

SCENE I. — *Mary's Chamber in Fotheringay Castle.*

*Mary Stuart and Mary Beaton.*

*Mary Stuart (sings).*

O Lord my God,  
I have trusted in thee ;

O Jesu my dearest one,  
Now set me free.

In prison's oppression,  
In sorrow's obsession,

I weary for thee.

With sighing and crying  
Bowed down as dying,

I adore thee, I implore thee, set me free !

5

10

Free are the dead : yet fain I would have had  
Once, before all captivity find end,  
Some breath of freedom living. These that come,  
I think, with no such message, must not find,  
For all this lameness of my limbs, a heart  
As maimed in me with sickness. Three years  
gone

15

When last I parted from the earl marshal's  
charge,

I did not think to see his face again

Turned on me as his prisoner. Now his wife

Will take no jealousy more to hear of it,

20

I trust, albeit we meet not as unfriends,  
 If it be mortal news he brings me. Go,  
 If I seem ready, as meseems I should,  
 And well arrayed to bear myself indeed  
 None otherwise than queenlike in their sight, 25  
 Bid them come in. *Exit Mary Beaton.*

I cannot tell at last  
 If it be fear or hope that should expect  
 Death: I have had enough of hope, and fear  
 Was none of my familiars while I lived  
 Such life as had more pleasant things to lose 30  
 Than death or life may now divide me from.  
 'Tis not so much to look upon the sun  
 With eyes that may not lead us where we will,  
 And halt behind the footless flight of hope  
 With feet that may not follow: nor were aught 35  
 So much, of all things life may think to have,  
 That one not cowardly born should find it worth  
 The purchase of so base a price as this,  
 To stand self-shamed as coward. I do not think  
 This is mine end that comes upon me: but 40  
 I had liefer far it were than, were it not,  
 That ever I should fear it.

*Enter Kent, Shrewsbury, Beale, and Sheriff.*

Sirs, good day:  
 With such good heart as prisoners have, I bid  
 You and your message welcome.

*Kent.*

Madam, this



The secretary of the council here hath charge 45  
To read as their commission.

*Mary Stuart.* Let me hear  
In as brief wise as may beseem the time  
The purport of it.

*Beale.* Our commission here  
Given by the council under the great seal  
Pronounces on your head for present doom 50  
Death, by this written sentence.

*Mary Stuart.* Ay, my lords?  
May I believe this, and not hold myself  
Mocked as a child with shadows? In God's  
name,  
Speak you, my lord of Shrewsbury: let me know  
If this be dream or waking.

*Kent.* Verily, 55  
No dream it is, nor dreamers we that pray,  
Madam, you meetly would prepare yourself  
To stand before God's judgment presently.

*Mary Stuart.* I had rather so than ever stand  
again  
Before the face of man's. Why speak not you, 60  
To whom I speak, my lord earl marshal? Nay,  
Look not so heavily: by my life, he stands  
As one at point to weep. Why, good my lord,  
To know that none may swear by Mary's life  
And hope again to find belief of man 65  
Upon so slight a warrant, should not bring

This trouble on your eyes ; look up, and say  
 The word you have for her that never was  
 Less than your friend, and prisoner.

*Shrewsbury.* None save this,  
 Which willingly I would not speak, I may ; 70  
 That presently your time is come to die.

*Mary Stuart.* Why, then, I am well content  
 to leave a world  
 Wherein I am no more serviceable at all  
 To God or man, and have therein so long  
 Endured so much affliction. All my life 75  
 I have ever earnestly desired the love  
 And friendship of your queen ; have warned her  
 oft

Of coming dangers ; and have cherished long  
 The wish that I but once might speak with her  
 In plain-souled confidence ; being well assured, 80  
 Had we but once met, there an end had been  
 Of jealousies between us : but our foes,  
 With equal wrong toward either, treacherously  
 Have kept us still in sunder : by whose craft  
 And crooked policy hath my sister's crown 85  
 Fallen in great peril, and myself have been  
 Imprisoned, and inveterately maligned,  
 And here must now be murdered. But I know  
 That only for my faith's sake I must die,  
 And this to know for truth is recompense 90  
 As large as all my sufferings. For the crime

Wherewith I am charged, upon this holy book  
 I lay mine hand for witness of my plea,  
 I am wholly ignorant of it ; and solemnly  
 Declare that never yet conspiracy 95  
 Devised against the queen my sister's life  
 Took instigation or assent from me.

*Kent.* You swear but on a popish Testament :  
 Such oaths are all as worthless as the book.

*Mary Stuart.* I swear upon the book wherein  
 I trust : 100  
 Would you give rather credit to mine oath  
 Sworn on your scriptures that I trust not in ?

*Kent.* Madam, I fain would have you heartily  
 Renounce your superstition ; toward which end  
 With us the godly dean of Peterborough, 105  
 Good Richard Fletcher, well approved for faith  
 Of God and of the queen, is hither come  
 To proffer you his prayerful ministry.

*Mary Stuart.* If you, my lords, or he will  
 pray for me,  
 I shall be thankful for your prayers ; but may not 110  
 With theirs that hold another faith mix mine.  
 I pray you therefore that mine almoner may  
 Have leave to attend on me, that from his hands  
 I, having made confession, may receive  
 The sacrament.

*Kent.* We may not grant you this. 115

*Mary Stuart.* I shall not see my chaplain ere  
 I die ?

But two months gone this grace was granted me  
 By word expressly from your queen, to have  
 Again his ministration : and at last  
 In the utter hour and bitter strait of death 120  
 Is this denied me ?

*Kent.* Madam, for your soul  
 More meet it were to cast these mummeries out  
 And bear Christ only in your heart, than serve  
 With ceremonies of ritual hand and tongue  
 His mere idolatrous likeness.

*Mary Stuart.* This were strange 125  
 That I should bear him visible in my hand  
 Or keep with lips and knees his titular rites  
 And cast in heart no thought upon him. Nay,  
 Put me, I pray, to no more argument :  
 But if this least thing be not granted, yet 130  
 Grant me to know the season of my death.

*Shrews.* At eight by dawn to-morrow you  
 must die.

*Mary Stuart.* So shall I hardly see the sun  
 again.

By dawn to-morrow ? meanest men condemned  
 Give not their lives' breath up so suddenly : 135  
 Howbeit, I had rather yield you thanks, who  
 make  
 Such brief end of the bitterness of death  
 For me who have borne such bitter length of life,  
 Than plead with protestation of appeal

For half a piteous hour's remission : nor 140  
 Henceforward shall I be denied of man  
 Aught, who may never now crave aught again  
 But whence is no denial. Yet shall this  
 Not easily be believed of men, nor find  
 In foreign ears acceptance, that a queen 145  
 Should be thrust out of life thus. Good my  
 friend,

Bid my physician Gorion come to me :  
 I have to speak with him —sirs, with your  
 leave —

Of certain monies due to me in France.  
 What, shall I twice desire your leave, my lords, 150  
 To live these poor last hours of mine alive  
 At peace among my friends ? I have much to do,  
 And little time wherein to do it is left.

*Shrews. (to Kent apart).* I pray she may not  
 mean worse than I would  
 Against herself ere morning.

*Kent.* Let not then 155  
 This French knave's drugs come near her, nor  
 himself :

We will take order for it.

*Shrews.* Nay, this were but  
 To exasperate more her thwarted heart, and make  
 Despair more desperate than itself. Pray God  
 She be not minded to compel us put 160  
 Force at the last upon her of men's hands

To hale her violently to death, and make  
 Judgment look foul and fierce as murder's face  
 With stain of strife and passion.

*Exeunt all but Mary Stuart and Mary Beaton.*

*Mary Stuart.* So, my friend,  
 The last of all our Maries are you left 165  
 To-morrow. Strange has been my life, and now  
 Strange looks my death upon me : yet, albeit  
 Nor the hour nor manner of it be mine to choose  
 Ours is it yet, and all men's in the world,  
 To make death welcome in what wise we will. 170  
 Bid you my chaplain, though he see me not,  
 Watch through the night and pray for me :  
 perchance,  
 When ere the sundawn they shall bring me forth,  
 I may behold him, and upon my knees  
 Receive his blessing. Let our supper be 175  
 Served earlier in than wont was : whereunto  
 I bid my true poor servants here, to take  
 Farewell and drink at parting to them all  
 The cup of my last kindness, in good hope  
 They shall stand alway constant in their faith 180  
 And dwell in peace together : thereupon  
 What little store is left me will I share  
 Among them, and between my girls divide  
 My wardrobe and my jewels severally,  
 Reserving but the black robe and the red 185  
 That shall attire me for my death : and last

With mine own hand shall be my will writ out  
And all memorials more set down therein  
That I would leave for legacies of love  
To my next kinsmen and my household folk. 190  
And to the king my brother yet of France  
Must I write briefly, but a word to say  
I am innocent of the charge whereon I die  
Now for my right's sake claimed upon this crown,  
And our true faith's sake, but am barred from sight 195  
Even of mine almoner here, though hard at hand ;  
And I would bid him take upon his charge  
The keeping of my servants, as I think  
He shall not for compassionate shame refuse  
Albeit his life be softer than his heart ; 200  
And in religion for a queen's soul pray  
That once was styled Most Christian, and is now  
In the true faith about to die, deprived  
Of all her past possessions. But this most  
And first behoves it, that the king of Spain 205  
By Gorion's word of mouth receive my heart,  
Who soon shall stand before him. Bid the leech  
Come hither, and alone, to speak with me.

*Exit Mary Beaton.*

She is dumb as death : yet never in her life  
Hath she been quick of tongue. For all the rest, 210  
Poor souls, how well they love me, all as well  
I think I know : and one of them or twain  
At least may surely see me to my death

Ere twice the hours have changed again. Per-  
chance

Love that can weep not would the gladlier die 215  
For those it cannot weep on. Time wears thin :  
They should not now play laggard : nay, he  
comes,

The last that ever speaks alone with me  
Before my soul shall speak alone with God.

*Enter Gorion.*

I have sent once more for you to no such end 220  
As sick men for physicians : no strong drug  
May put the death next morning twelve hours  
back

Whose twilight overshadows me, that am  
Nor sick nor medicinable. Let me know  
If I may lay the last of all my trust 225  
On you that ever shall be laid on man  
To prove him kind and loyal.

*Gorion.* So may God

Deal with me, madam, as I prove to you  
Faithful, though none but I were in the world  
That you might trust beside.

*Mary Stuart.* With equal heart 230

Do I believe and thank you. I would send  
To Paris for the ambassador from Spain  
This letter with two diamonds, which your craft  
For me must cover from men's thievish eyes  
Where they may be not looked for.



*Gor.* Easily 235

Within some molten drug may these be hid,  
And faithfully by me conveyed to him.

*Mary Stuart.* The lesser of them shall he  
keep in sign

Of my good friendship toward himself: but this  
In token to King Philip shall he give 240

That for the truth I die, and dying commend  
To him my friends and servants, Gilbert Curle,  
His sister, and Jane Kennedy, who shall

To-night watch by me; and my ladies all  
That have endured my prison: let him not 245  
Forget from his good favour one of these

That I remember to him: Charles Arundel,  
And either banished Paget; one whose heart  
Was better toward my service than his hand,  
Morgan: and of mine exiles for their faith, 250

The prelates first of Glasgow and of Ross;  
And Liggons and Throgmorton, that have lost  
For me their leave to live on English earth;  
And Westmoreland, that lives now more forlorn  
Than died that earl who rose for me with him. 255

These I beseech him favour for my sake  
Still: and forget not, if he come again  
To rule as king in England, one of them  
That were mine enemies here: the treasurer first,  
And Leicester, Walsingham, and Huntingdon, 260  
At Tutbury once my foe, fifteen years gone,

And Wade that spied upon me three years since,  
 And Paulet here my gaoler : set them down  
 For him to wreak wrath's utmost justice on,  
 In my revenge remembered. Though I be 265  
 Dead, let him not forsake his hope to reign  
 Upon this people : with my last breath left  
 I make this last prayer to him, that not the less  
 He will maintain the invasion yet designed  
 Of us before on England : let him think, 270  
 It is God's quarrel, and on earth a cause  
 Well worthy of his greatness : which being won,  
 Let him forget no man of these nor me.  
 And now will I lie down, that four hours' sleep  
 May give me strength before I sleep again 275  
 And need take never thought for waking more.

SCENE II. — *The Presence Chamber.*

*Shrewsbury, Kent, Paulet, Drury, Melville, and Attendants.*

*Kent.* The stroke is past of eight.

*Shrewsbury.* Not far, my lord.

*Kent.* What stays the provost and the sheriff  
yet

That went ere this to bring the prisoner forth ?  
 What, are her doors locked inwards ? then per-  
chance

Our last night's auguries of some close design 5

By death contrived of her self-slaughterous hand  
 To baffle death by justice hit but right  
 The heart of her bad purpose.

*Shrews.*

Fear it not :

See where she comes, a queenlier thing to see  
 Than whom such thoughts take hold on.

*Enter Mary Stuart, led by two gentlemen and preceded  
 by the Sheriff; Mary Beaton, Barbara Mowbray,  
 and other ladies behind, who remain in the doorway.*

*Melville (kneeling to Mary).* Woe am I, 10

Madam, that I must bear to Scotland back  
 Such tidings watered with such tears as these.

*Mary Stuart.* Weep not, good Melville: rather  
 should your heart

Rejoice that here an end is come at last  
 Of Mary Stuart's long sorrows; for be sure 15  
 That all this world is only vanity.

And this record I pray you make of me,  
 That a true woman to my faith I die,  
 And true to Scotland and to France: but God  
 Forgive them that have long desired mine end 20  
 And with false tongues have thirsted for my blood  
 As the hart thirsteth for the water-brooks.

O God, who art truth, and the author of all truth,  
 Thou knowest the extreme recesses of my heart,  
 And how that I was willing all my days 25  
 That England should with Scotland be fast  
 friends.



Jane Kennedy, with Elspeth Curle: of men, 50  
Bourgoin and Gorion shall attend on me,  
Gervais and Didier. Come then, let us go.

*Exeunt: manent Mary Beaton and Barbara Mowbray.*

*Barbara.* I wist I was not worthy, though my  
child

It is that her own hands made Christian: but  
I deemed she should have bid you go with her. 55  
Alas, and would not all we die with her?

*Mary Beaton.* Why, from the gallery here at  
hand your eyes  
May go with her along the hall beneath  
Even to the scaffold: and I fain would hear  
What fain I would not look on. Pray you, then, 60  
If you may bear to see it as those below,  
Do me that sad good service of your eyes  
For mine to look upon it, and declare  
All that till all be done I will not see;  
I pray you of your pity.

*Barb.* Though mine heart 65  
Break, it shall not for fear forsake the sight  
That may be faithful yet in following her,  
Nor yet for grief refuse your prayer, being fain  
To give your love such bitter comfort, who  
So long have never left her.

*Mary Beaton.* Till she die — 70  
I have ever known I shall not till she die.



The sheriff, and the clerk at hand on high, 95  
To read the warrant.

*Mary Beaton.* None stands there but knows  
What things therein are writ against her: God  
Knows what therein is writ not. God forgive  
All.

*Barb.* Not a face there breathes of all the  
throng  
But is more moved than hers to hear this read, 100  
Whose look alone is changed not.

*Mary Beaton.* Once I knew  
A face that changed not in as dire an hour  
More than the queen's face changes. Hath he not  
Ended?

*Barb.* You cannot hear them speak below:  
Come near and hearken; bid not me repeat 105  
All.

*Mary Beaton.* I beseech you — for I may not  
come.

*Barb.* Now speaks Lord Shrewsbury but a  
word or twain,  
And brieflier yet she answers, and stands up  
As though to kneel, and pray.

*Mary Beaton.* I too have prayed —  
God hear at last her prayers not less than mine, 110  
Which failed not, sure, of hearing.

*Barb.* Now draws nigh  
That heretic priest, and bows himself, and thrice

Strives, as a man that sleeps in pain, to speak,  
Stammering : she waves him by, as one whose  
prayers

She knows may nought avail her : now she kneels, <sup>115</sup>  
And the earls rebuke her, and she answers not,  
Kneeling. O Christ, whose likeness there en-  
graved

She strikes against her bosom, hear her ! Now  
That priest lifts up his voice against her prayer,  
Praying : and a voice all round goes up with his : <sup>120</sup>  
But hers is lift up higher than climbs their cry,  
In the great psalms of penitence ; and now  
She prays aloud in English ; for the Pope  
Our father, and his church ; and for her son,  
And for the queen her murderess ; and that God <sup>125</sup>  
May turn from England yet his wrath away ;  
And so forgives her enemies ; and implores  
High intercession of the saints with Christ,  
Whom crucified she kisses on his cross,  
And crossing now her breast — Ah, heard you  
not ? 130

*Even as thine arms were spread upon the cross,  
So make thy grace, O Jesus, wide for me,  
Receive me to thy mercy so, and so  
Forgive my sins.*

*Mary Beaton.* So be it, if so God please.  
Is she not risen up yet ?

*Barb.* Yea, but mine eyes 135



Darken: because those deadly twain close masked  
 Draw nigh as men that crave forgiveness, which  
 Gently she grants: *for now*, she said, *I hope*  
*You shall end all my troubles.* Now meseems  
 They would put hand upon her as to help, 140  
 And disarray her raiment: but she smiles —  
 Heard you not that? can you not hear nor speak,  
 Poor heart, for pain? *Truly*, she said, *my lords,*  
*I never had such chamber-grooms before*  
*As these to wait on me.*

*Mary Beaton.* An end, an end. 145

*Barb.* Now come those twain upon the scaffold up

Whom she preferred before us: and she lays  
 Her crucifix down, which now the headsman  
 takes

Into his cursed hand, but being rebuked  
 Puts back for shame that sacred spoil of hers. 150

And now they lift her veil up from her head  
 Softly, and softly draw the black robe off,  
 And all in red as of a funeral flame  
 She stands up statelier yet before them, tall  
 And clothed as if with sunset: and she takes 155  
 From Elspeth's hand the crimson sleeves, and  
 draws

Their covering on her arms: and now those twain  
 Burst out aloud in weeping: and she speaks —  
*Weep not; I promised for you.* Now she kneels;

And Jane binds round a kerchief on her eyes : 160  
 And smiling last her heavenliest smile on earth,  
 She waves a blind hand toward them, with *Fare-*  
*well,*

*Farewell, to meet again :* and they come down  
 And leave her praying aloud, *In thee, O Lord,*  
*I put my trust :* and now, that psalm being through, 165  
 She lays between the block and her soft neck  
 Her long white peerless hands up tenderly,  
 Which now the headsman draws again away,  
 But softly too : now stir her lips again —  
*Into thine hands, O Lord, into thine hands,* 170  
*Lord, I commend my spirit :* and now — but now,  
 Look you, not I, the last upon her.

*Mary Beaton.*

Ha!

He strikes awry : she stirs not. Nay, but now  
 He strikes aright, and ends it.

*Barb.*

Hark, a cry.

*Voice below.* So perish all found enemies of the  
 queen ! 175

*Another Voice.* Amen.

*Mary Beaton.* I heard that very cry go up  
 Far off long since to God, who answers here.

THE END.

# Notes to Mary Stuart

*For purely biographical material see the Index of Persons.*

1. The motto from Æschylus is thus translated by Plumptre :

“ Now for the tongue of bitter hate let tongue  
Of bitter hate be given. Loud and long  
The voice of Justice claiming now her debt ;  
And for the murderous blow  
Let him who slew with murderous blow repay.  
' That the wrong-doer bear the wrong he did,'  
Thrice-ancient saying of a far-off time,  
This speaketh as we speak.”

3. as the first part . . . was dedicated. The dedication of *Chastelard* runs as follows : “ I dedicate this play, as a partial expression of reverence and gratitude, to the chief of living poets ; to the first dramatist of his age ; to the greatest exile, and therefore to the greatest man of France ; to Victor Hugo.” This is followed by an extract from Maundevile's *Voyage and Travaile*, ch. xxviii. “ Another Yle is there toward the Northe, in the See Ocean, where that ben fulle cruele and ful evele Wommen of Nature ; and thei han precious Stones in hire Eye ; and thei ben of that kynde, that zif they beholden ony man, thei sley him anon with the beholdyng, as dothe the Basilisk.” *Bothwell* has a motto from Æschylus, and a dedication à *Victor Hugo*, in the form of a French sonnet.

4. Time. The dates given by Swinburne are New Style. In Old Style they become August 4 and February 8. Old Style is used for all the dates in these notes. When a date, however, falls between January 1 and March 21, it is credited to the calendar year of our modern reckoning. Thus the date of Mary's execution is given as February 8, 1587, instead of 1586-7.

7. Act I. Scene I. Date August 4, 1586.

7, 5. Shall bleach to death in prison. The date of this scene is August 4, 1586. Mary Stuart has been a prisoner of Elizabeth, or at least an unwilling guest, for eighteen years.

**11, 112. he that went forth huntsman.** Actæon, for his boastfulness changed by Artemis into a stag, and torn to pieces by his own hounds on Mount Cithæron.

**13-14, 157-58. This is . . . queen.** The letter is dated July 17, 1586, and may be found in Labanoff's *Recueil* (6, 383), together with a discussion of its authenticity. It has been the subject of much controversy, since it was mainly upon the evidence of this letter that Mary was convicted. Her defenders have claimed that the incriminating passages were interpolations forged by Phillipps, Walsingham's spy. According to the testimony of Nau and Curle, there was first a French minute in Mary's autograph, then a copy of this minute made by Nau and given to Curle, then an English translation of this copy, made by Curle and by him put into cipher. Phillipps intercepted this cipher, translated it for Walsingham, and then took it to London, and passed it on to Babington, July 29. Phillipps thus had the letter in his possession for more than ten days. It is only in this (possibly) altered form that the letter has been preserved. The intermediate forms, which were certainly in the hands of the ministers, mysteriously disappeared. Babington, of course, received the entire contents of the letter in good faith.

**16, 221-22. by what means . . . proceed.** This passage, and the later passage (19, 278-293) of sixteen lines, **We can make no day sure . . . cut the common posts off**, are believed by Mary's defenders to have been forged by Walsingham or Phillipps.

**16, 224. this last hold.** Chartley Castle.

**17, 230. the ambassador of Spain in France.** Mendoza.

**17, 250-51. the plot laid of the Puritan part.** This plot seems to have been an invention of Mary.

**24, 403. the envoy sent from France.** Châteauneuf, who had just been appointed to succeed Mauvissière.

**24, 413. the Castle of Dudley.** A few miles south of Chartley, near Birmingham.

**28, 493. those following four.** Burghley, Walsingham, Hunsdon, and Knowles, named in the following speech.

**28-29, 515-16. at first She writes me, etc.** A brief dated June 25, 1586.

**35, 671. Good Captain Ballard, Father Fortescue.** Father Ballard assumed the name of Captain Fortescue when he visited England in disguise.

**39, 748. Fly; farewell.** All the conspirators but Ballard escaped arrest at this time, but were soon thereafter tracked to their hiding-places and captured.

**40. Act I. Scenes II, III.** Dated August 8, 1586.

**40. Chartley.** Chartley Manor is in Staffordshire, and then belonged to the Earl of Essex. The castle is now a ruin.

**41, 7. The gospeller that bade us to the sport.** Sir Amias Paulet, contemptuously called "gospeller" on account of his rigid Puritanism.

**41, 22. Since you rode last.** Mary's flight to the border after her defeat at Langside, when she rode sixty miles in one day.

**42, 36. The letter that I writ, etc.** "The famous and terrible letter in which, with many gracious excuses and professions of regret and attachment, she transmits to Elizabeth a full and vivid report of the hideous gossip retailed by Bess of Hardwick regarding her character and person at a time when the reporter of these abominations was on friendly terms with her husband's royal charge." Swinburne. This letter (conjecturally dated November, 1584) may be read in Labanoff's *Recueil*, 6, 50. It is preserved among the Cecil papers at Hatfield House, and has never left the possession of Burghley's descendants. Labanoff's belief is that it was never seen by Elizabeth, but was either despatched to her and intercepted by Burghley, or was not sent at all, but seized with Mary's other papers at Chartley in 1586.

**43, 54. That other Bess.** Elizabeth of Hardwick, Countess of Shrewsbury.

**45, 116. Her and her sons . . . four.** This is an error. The Countess of Shrewsbury had issue only by the second of her four husbands. The Countess and her sons circulated a scandalous story about Mary and the Earl of Shrewsbury, which they were afterwards forced to retract.

**46, 128. her kindless lovers.** Unnatural lovers. "Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!" *Hamlet*, 11, 2.

**46, 132. Her chamberlain.** Sir Christopher Hatton.

**46, 140. another born her man.** Leicester.

46, 144. **one base-born, a stranger.** One Simier, in attendance upon the Duc d'Anjou.

46, 147. **the duke . . . should be.** The Duc d'Alençon, afterwards Duc d'Anjou, son of Catherine de' Medici, and brother of Charles IX and Henry III. Although much younger than Elizabeth, he was proposed to her for a husband, and she kept him "hoping and languishing" for twelve years, until his death in 1584.

51, 243-44. **Parma stands . . . stead.** The Prince of Parma was a nephew of Don John of Austria.

51, 248. **our kinsman king.** Henry III, brother of Mary's first husband.

53, 311. **My heart . . . quicken.** Note that this line is broken, and completed after the interpolated song.

55, 337. **Poor boy that played her bridegroom!** Francis II, married to Mary at the age of fifteen.

55, 349. **Doth he wait on you, etc.** Thomas Phillipps, secretary and spy of Walsingham. "This Phillippes is of low stature, slender every way, dark yellow heared on the head and cleare yellow bearded, eated in the face with small pockes, of short sight, thirtye yeares of age by apparence and as is sayd secretarye Walsingham's man." Letter from Mary to Morgan, July 17, 1586.

57, 397. **Tixall.** An estate near Chartley, owned by Sir Walter Aston.

62, 499-500. **last month You writ my master word, etc.** Paulet to Walsingham, June 29, 1586. See Paulet's *Letter Book*, 211.

63, 522. **the brewer, your honest man.** It was arranged by the treacherous Gifford that the Burton brewer who supplied Chartley with ale should provide a special cask for Mary and her household. This cask was furnished with a false bottom, by means of which letters were received and despatched. All this correspondence was brought into the hands of Walsingham.

66, 605. **the old saw.** "Out of God's blessing into the warm sun." A proverbial phrase of uncertain origin and meaning.

"Good King, that must approve the common saw,

Thou out of heaven's benediction comest

To the warm sun!"

*King Lear*, II, 2.

68, 36. **Tutbury.** In January, 1585, Mary was removed from Wingfield Manor to Tutbury Castle in Staffordshire, where she had been held for a time in 1569. In April, Sir Amias Paulet was appointed her keeper. On the Christmas Eve following she was removed to Chartley Castle in the same county.

68, 37. **Your birthright in this land.** Paulet belonged to a Somerset family, and his childhood was spent in that county and in Devonshire.

72, 135-36. **you That have this gallant office.** Sir Thomas Gorges.

73, 146. **A face beside you, etc.** Sir William Wade.

76, 218. **and her with me.** Mary Beaton.

79. **Act II. Scene I.** Dated late in August, 1586.

79. **Windsor Castle.** The royal residence on the Thames, near London, occupied by many English sovereigns from William the Conqueror to Victoria.

83, 90. **the Parmesan.** Alessandro Farnese, Prince of Parma, and governor of the Netherlands.

87, 187. **with more pains, etc.** The most shocking barbarity was shown in the execution of Babington and his accomplices.

89. **Act II. Scene II.** Mary returned to Chartley, August 30. This scene must be dated soon after.

89, 12. **seventeen days.** From August 8 to August 30, according to Labanoff.

91, 45-47. **the witness borne . . . By those her secretaries.** Nau and Curle were interrogated September 2, and again September 20.

91, 55. **The Frenchman.** Curle.

93, 87. **the most faithful head, etc.** Chastelard was executed February 22, 1563.

93, 107. **That I shall never leave her till she die.** "But I will never leave you till you die." The closing line of *Bothwell*.

99. **Tyburn.** The place of execution of these conspirators was not Tyburn, but "a field at the upper end of Holborne, hard by the high way side to S. Giles."

100, 13-15. **one that shall die . . . to his defence.** Babington.

**102, 74. Shows seven for dead, etc.** Babington, Ballard, Tichborne, Savage, Barnwell, Tilney, and Abington were executed September 20, 1586. Salisbury, Donn, Jones, Charnock, Travers, Gage, and Bellamy were executed on the day following.

**103, 98. that hallowed earth.** Ireland.

**105, 150. And that my brother may possess, etc.** Babington's estates, which were large, were forfeited to the crown, and afterwards bestowed upon Raleigh by Elizabeth.

**106, 168. and verified a saying in me, etc.** Silence gives consent.

**III. Act III.** Dated October 14, 1586.

**III. Fotheringay Castle.** Situated in Northamptonshire, near Peterborough. The trial of Mary took place here October 14-15, 1586, and her execution February 8, 1587. The castle was demolished in the seventeenth century.

**III. The Commissioners.** Forty-six peers and privy councillors constituted the commission for the trial of Mary. They were appointed October 6, and thirty-six of them assembled at Fotheringay October 12. Mary at first refused to appear before them, but afterwards consented under protest, and the trial began October 14.

**115, 103. that secretary's.** Walsingham.

**116, 116. the pope's bull.** The bull of Pius V, excommunicating and dethroning Elizabeth, was issued in 1570. Similar bulls were issued by Gregory XIII and Sixtus V.

**122, 277. her, who contrariwise, etc.** "When Burghley brought against her the unanswerable charge of having at that moment in her service, and in receipt of an annual pension, the instigator of a previous attempt on the life of Elizabeth, she had the unwary audacity to cite in her justification the pensions allowed by Elizabeth to her adversaries in Scotland, and especially to her son. It is remarkable that just two months later, in a conversation with her keepers, she again made use of the same extraordinary argument in reply to the same inevitable imputation, and would not be brought to admit that the two cases were other than parallel." Swinburne.

**125, 349. Esther than Judith.** Instead of playing the part of Judith, who slew Holophernes, she would rather, like Esther, save her people from massacre.

**126, 387. An act against their lives, etc.** In Octo-



ber, 1584, "Walsingham and Burghley between them bethought them of a new and special appeal to the loyalty of the country. An 'Instrument of an Association for the preservation of the Queen's Majesty's Royal person' was drawn up with great care and circulated not only among the clergy and nobility, but among freeholders, farmers, and all men of substance in the several counties of England and Wales. . . . The signatories bound themselves under an oath to preserve the Queen's person with their substance and their lives, and to 'pursue to utter extermination' all who should attempt to harm her 'or claim succession to the crown by the untimely death of her Majesty.'" Augustus Jessopp. The provisions of this instrument were embodied in an Act of Parliament a few weeks later. It may be added that Mary subscribed to this "bond of association."

**141. Act IV. Scene I.** Dated November 28, 1586. Bellièvre had three interviews with Elizabeth, November 28, December 5, and December 24. The first of them is represented in this scene.

**141. Richmond.** On the Thames, between London and Windsor. Here Elizabeth often held court, and here she died. The palace was demolished in 1648.

**141, 6-8. To take off . . . Authority.** At midnight of the second day of Mary's trial at Fotheringay, Elizabeth sent a message to the commissioners adjourning the case to the Star-Chamber.

**142, 26. piteous challenge and imperial plea.** Mary's letter to Elizabeth, ? November 19, 1586. Labanoff, 6, 444.

**144, 78. Wise Plato's word.** See the Third Book of *The Republic*. Jowett's Plato, III, 104.

**145, 111. These nineteen . . . reign.** Elizabeth had been upon the throne for nearly twenty-nine years. It may be that Bellièvre means the (nearly) nineteen years since Mary came to England.

**145, 115. rampire.** Rampart. The meaning is that fear of Mary's succession and a Catholic restoration had rallied the English people to Elizabeth's support, and that it would be ruinous to England to have this cause of unity removed.

**146, 122. A certain prince's minister.** Mendoza, Philip's ambassador, formerly to England, now to France.

**147, 144. she hath three times sought my life.** The plots of Parry and Babington are two of the three mentioned.

Swinburne's coupling of the names of Lopez and Parry (82, 65) seems to indicate that the plot of Lopez stood in his mind as the third (see *Index of Persons*). Otherwise, the third would be supplied by Arden or Somerville, implicated in the Throckmorton conspiracy.

147, 158. **who now this second time, etc.** Morgan instigated Parry's attempted assassination as well as the Babington conspiracy.

150, 226-27. **the claim . . . Philip.** Should the Prince of Parma invade England, France would stand in greater peril from Spain than when menaced only by the claim of Philip to the English succession.

150, 232. **Steer any way, etc.** The death of Mary might lead to a Spanish occupation of England, thereby exposing France to danger from both north and south.

151, 247. **The smooth-cheeked French man-harlot, nor that hand, etc.** Charles IX of France and Philip II of Spain.

152, 274. **those twain that come, etc.** Gray and Sir Robert Melville. Melville was honest in his efforts to save Mary, but Gray, who ostensibly pleaded for her, wrote to Walsingham advising that she be murdered in secret.

154, 331. **his dead father's slayer.** Bothwell.

154, 337. **that brother-in-law that was of ours.** Philip II.

157, 407. **what fire of joy brake forth, etc.** "From tower and steeple the bells crashed out, unceasing for a whole day and night. Church answered church till the news had been borne to the furthest glen in Cumberland. London was illuminated. Faggots blazed in town and village; and a shout of exultation rose out of every loyal throat." Froude.

161, 492-93. **She to this Makes bitter answer, etc.** The matter here given is paraphrased from Mary's letter to the Archbishop of Glasgow, November 24, 1586. Labanoff, 6, 466.

162, 522. **Be persecuted even as David once.** When Saul sent messengers to slay David in his house, he escaped through the window (1 Samuel xix, 12). Afterwards, Saul was defeated and

slain on Mount Gilboa by the Philistines, and David succeeded him as king of Israel (1 Samuel xxxi, 1).

162, 528. **Our shield shall not, etc.** "For there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil." (2 Samuel I, 21.)

163. **Act IV. Scene II.** Dated December 17, 1586. This date is determined by one of Paulet's letters.

165, 54. **this hue and cry.** "Rumours were spread, that London was fired, and the Queen of Scots had escaped; precepts of *hue and cry* were sent to the several towns, to retake the fugitive." G. Chalmers.

166, 81. **Those treasons of the French ambassador.** The ambassador was Châteauneuf. Swinburne says that Elizabeth "had a charge trumped up against him of participation in a conspiracy against her life."

167, 95. **this man's tale, etc.** See note just preceding. On January 4, 1587, one William Stafford, a notorious reprobate, sought out Destrappes, Châteauneuf's secretary, and took him to see a man named Moody, an inmate of the debtor's prison at Newgate, who offered, for the payment of his debt, to murder Elizabeth. Châteauneuf, being warned of this, indignantly drove Stafford from his presence when the latter appeared. Two days later, Destrappes was arrested and sent to the Tower. Stafford, failing in his attempt at blackmail, brought charges against Châteauneuf, who was summoned to defend himself before a council of ministers. Here Moody was impudent enough to accuse Châteauneuf to his face, but the case was so obviously trumped-up that nothing came of it. There is an anachronism in the discussion of this affair by Paulet and Drury, December 17, 1586.

167, 102. **such means as once, etc.** The murder of Darnley at Kirk of Field.

170, 179. **That oath whereby we stand associated.** The bond of association. See note 126, 387.

171, 222. **Make heretics of these papers.** Burn them.

172, 247-48. **God forbid That I should make, etc.** "God forbid that I should make so foul a shipwreck of my conscience, or leave so great a blot to my poor posterity, to shed blood without law or warrant." Paulet's *Letter Book*, 362.

176. Enter Mary Stuart and Mary Beaton. The material for this scene is taken from Paulet's letter to Davison, December 21, 1586.

176, 343. a memorial writ, etc. Mary's last letter to Elizabeth, December 19, 1586.

176, 349. take the assay of it. Mary offers to prove, by her own handling of the paper, that it is not poisoned.

177, 365. your queen's grandsire. Henry VII.

181, 451-52. that commission of your causes held At York. A conference held at York in October, 1568, to inquire into Mary's guilt in connection with the murder of Darnley. It was here that the famous Casket Letters were first produced. No definite conclusion was reached.

181, 459-60. his book is extant. Probably *A Defence of the Honour of the Right Highe, Mightye, and Noble Princesse Marie, Queene of Scotland and Dowager of France, etc.* London, 1569. The book was at once suppressed, and copies of it are very rare.

182, 472. my lord treasurer. Burghley.

183, 488-90. my rebels here . . . have been Maintained. See note 122, 277.

183, 493-94. What did she . . . at Newhaven? Newhaven is Havre de Grace. This is an allusion to Elizabeth's occupation of that port with an English garrison in 1562, at the time of the French civil wars. Curiously enough, Paulet had been asked the same question by Catherine de' Medici in 1577, when he was at the French court.

184, 516. his entertainment there. In 1583 Walsingham was sent to Edinburgh to judge of affairs at close quarters, and to dissuade James from negotiating with Spain in his mother's behalf. He went reluctantly, and his mission was unfruitful.

188, 612-13. some one said I must be perilous ever.

" Men must love you in life's spite ;  
For you will always kill them ; man by man  
Your lips will bite them dead ; yea, though you would,  
You shall not spare one ; all will die of you."

*Chastelard, v, 2.*

190, 668 my poor servant slain before my face.  
David Rizzio.

191, 678-79. of him indeed Record was made. He was avenged by the murder of Darnley.

195. *Après tant de jours, etc.* See *Chastelard*, I, 2. This exquisite lyric is a notable illustration of Swinburne's French verse. To translate it would be a crime.

197. Act IV, Scene III. Dated February 1, 1587.

197. Greenwich. Situated on the Thames, a few miles below London Bridge. Here Elizabeth was born. The palace was destroyed during the Commonwealth, and afterwards rebuilt, but converted into a hospital.

201, 87. This dainty fellow. Sir Amias Paulet.

202, 112. my lord admiral. Charles Howard, Lord Howard of Effingham, Earl of Nottingham.

202, 124. the lord chancellor. Sir Thomas Bromley.

203, 145. This letter . . . last writ. The letter is dated December 19, 1586. It may be found in Labanoff, 6, 474.

204, 170. her honoured mother's. Mary of Guise.

207, 249-50. the duke . . . and his knave. The Duc d'Anjou, and one Simier, in attendance on him.

208, 263. The she-wolf that I saved, etc. Livy, as a rationalizing explanation of the Romulus and Remus story, suggests that the wolf (*lupa*) who suckled the princes was a courtesan. Hence the Latin word (*lupanar*) for brothel. By a sort of pun, this word is brought into relation with the Louvre (*Lupara* or *Louverie*) which was originally the name of a hunting-lodge.

213. Act V. Scene I. Dated February 7, 1586.

213. O Lord my God, etc. A translation of the Latin verses composed by Mary just before her execution.

O Domine Deus, speravi in te !

O care mi Jesu, nunc libera me !

In dura catena, in misera poena,

Languendo, gemendo, et genu flectendo,

Adoro, imploro ut liberes me.

213, 17. the earl marshal. The Earl of Shrewsbury.

221, 205. that the king of Spain, etc. The author of *La Mort de la Royne d'Ecosse* (in Jebb) says that Mary's physician

and surgeon demanded of Paulet her heart, that they might take it to France.

**223, 255. that earl who rose for me with him.** Thomas Percy, Earl of Northumberland.

**223, 259. the treasurer.** Burghley.

**224. Act V. Scene II.** Dated Wednesday, February 8, 1586.

**229, 112. That heretic priest.** Richard Fletcher, Dean of Peterborough.

**230, 122. the great psalms of penitence.** Miserere mei, Deus, etc. In te, Domine, speravi, etc. Qui habitat in adjutorio, etc.

**231, 159. Weep not . . . you.** "Ne criez vous, j'ay promis pour vous."

**232, 170-71. Into . . . spirit.** In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum. Luke xxiii, 46.

**232, 175-76. Voice below . . . Another voice.** The Earl of Kent and the Dean of Peterborough.

## Index of Persons<sup>1</sup>

- Abington.** Edward Abington (or Habington, 1553 ?-1586) was one of the conspirators with Babington. He vehemently maintained his innocence, but was executed with the others.
- Allen.** William Allen (1532-1594) was a Catholic theologian who left England in 1565, and established a college for English students, first at Douay, then at Rheims. In 1584 he entered upon a course of political intrigue directed against Elizabeth and English Protestantism, and advocated the claims of Philip II to the English throne. He was made a cardinal in August, 1587. The attribution to him of that title in *Mary Stuart* is thus inaccurate.
- Arden.** Francis Arden had been in the Tower for over two years when mentioned in the play, and was under sentence of death. He remained in prison until his escape in 1597.
- Arundel.** Philip Howard, first Earl of Arundel (1557-1595), was converted to Catholicism in 1584, and intrigued against Elizabeth. He was sent to the Tower in 1585, and remained a prisoner until his death.
- Aston.** Sir Walter Aston (*d.* 1589) was the owner of Tixall, an estate near Chartley.
- Aubespine.** See *Châteauneuf*.
- Aumale.** Charles de Lorraine, Duc d'Aumale (1556-1631), was an adherent of the League in the French religious wars, and leader of the party after the murder, in 1588, of Henry I, third Duke of Guise. When Sir William Waad was sent to Paris in 1585 to demand the surrender of Morgan, he was waylaid by Aumale near Amiens and given a severe beating.

<sup>1</sup> The biographical material of this Index is based chiefly upon the *Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee. Only such facts are presented as seem necessary for an intelligent reading of the drama.

- Babington.** Anthony Babington (1561–1586) was a page in the household of Mary Stuart during her imprisonment at Sheffield, and afterwards leader of the Catholic conspiracy in her behalf. He was executed with six of his companions, September 20, 1585.
- Ballard.** John Ballard (*d.* 1586) was the chief instigator of the Babington conspiracy. He was a Jesuit priest, and visited England disguised as a soldier under the name of Captain Fortescue. He was the first of the conspirators to be executed September 20.
- Barnes.** Thomas Barnes was an agent of Phillipps in betraying the correspondence conducted by Mary from Chartley.
- Barnwell.** Robert Barnwell was one of the conspirators with Babington. The *Dictionary of National Biography* gives no account of him except in this connection.
- Beale.** Robert Beale (1541–1601) was a diplomatist and antiquary, who was sent on numerous missions to Mary, and who accompanied Lord Buckhurst when he informed her of the death-sentence. He had the duty of reading the warrant aloud at Fotheringay just before the execution, of which he has left an account.
- Beaton.** Mary Beaton is the only character in the tragedy presented in a mainly fictitious light. The real Mary Beaton was, however, one of the “four Maries” who attended the Queen in her earlier years. She married Alexander Ogilvie while the Queen was still in Scotland.
- Beaton.** See **Glasgow.**
- Belleau.** Rémy Belleau (1528–1577) was a French poet, and a member of the Pléiade.
- Bellièvre.** Pomponne de Bellièvre (1529–1607) was sent by the French court to Elizabeth in 1586 to demand Mary’s pardon.
- Bourgoin.** Dominique Bourgoin was Mary’s physician, and one of the attendants chosen to accompany her to the scaffold.
- Bromley.** Sir Thomas Bromley (1530–1587) became Lord Chancellor in 1579, and was active in the prosecution of the Babington conspirators and of Mary. The strain of her trial and execution proved too much for his strength, and he died a few weeks afterward.



**Buckhurst.** Thomas Sackville, first Earl of Dorset and Baron Buckhurst (1536-1608), was the poet of *A Myrroure for Magistrates* and *Gorboduc*. He was one of the commissioners for the trial of Mary, but took no part in the proceedings. He was sent to Fotheringay in December, 1586, to announce to Mary the sentence of death.

**Burghley.** William Cecil, Lord Burghley (1520-1598), was Secretary of State under Elizabeth, and foremost minister of the Crown.

**Carey.** See Hunsdon.

**Cecil.** See Burghley.

**Chastelard.** Pierre Boscobel de Chastelard (1540-1563) was a French poet who came to Scotland in Mary's train in 1561. Discovered one night hiding in her bed-chamber (his second offence of this sort), he was seized, sentenced, and hanged the next morning, February 22, 1563.

**Chateaufeuf.** Guillaume de l'Aubespine, Marquis de Chateaufeuf (1547-1629), was sent in August, 1585, to replace Mauvisière as French ambassador to Elizabeth.

**Curle.** Elspeth Curle was a sister of Gilbert Curle, and one of Mary's attendants on the scaffold.

**Curle.** Gilbert Curle was Nau's subordinate as secretary to Mary. Her attendant, Barbara Mowbray, became his wife.

**Davison.** William Davison (1541?-1608) was secretary of Elizabeth, and assistant to Walsingham. He was named on the commission for the trial of Mary, but took no part in the proceedings. He presented the warrant for Mary's execution to Elizabeth, who signed it, but asked Davison to hint to Mary's keepers that they might privately rid her of her troublesome prisoner. He wrote a letter to that effect, but Paulet and Drury indignantly repudiated the suggestion. After the execution of Mary, he was made a scapegoat by Elizabeth, who charged him with having exceeded his instructions, and he was imprisoned in the Tower for two years.

**Didier.** Didier Siffard was an aged servant of Mary, a butler, mentioned in her will, and one of those chosen to accompany her to the scaffold.

**Donne.** Henry Donn was one of the conspirators tried and executed with Babington.

**Drury.** Sir Drue Drury (1531?-1617) was a gentleman-usher at Elizabeth's court. In November, 1586, he was sent to Fotheringay to assist Paulet in the wardership of Mary.

**Dudley.** See **Leicester**.

**Egerton.** Sir Thomas Egerton, Baron Ellesmere and Viscount Brackley (1540?-1617), was Solicitor-General at the time of Mary's trial.

**Elizabeth.** Elizabeth, Queen of England and Ireland (1533-1603), was the daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. She came to the throne in 1558. Her attitude toward Mary was determined by the fact that the latter laid claim to the throne, and had the support of the Catholic party at home and abroad. Several attempts upon her life were made in the interest of Mary, who connived at, if she did not instigate them. This is the ample justification of Mary's trial and execution.

**Ellesmere.** See **Egerton**.

**Farnese.** Alessandro Farnese, Prince of Parma (1546-1592), was an Italian soldier in the service of Philip II, and one of the foremost generals of his age. He succeeded his uncle, Don John of Austria, as governor of the Spanish Netherlands.

**Fernihurst.** Andrew Ker of Ferniehurst was a son-in-law of Sir William Kirkcaldy of Grange, and was by him appointed provost of Edinburgh at the time when that city was being held for Mary against the assault of the English and Scotch partisans of her son.

**Fletcher.** Richard Fletcher (*d.* 1596) was Dean of Peterborough, and afterwards Bishop of London. He officiated as chaplain at the execution of Mary. He was the father of John Fletcher, the dramatist.

**Gage.** Robert Gage was one of the conspirators tried and executed with Babington.

**Gawdy.** Sir Francis Gawdy (*d.* 1606) was Queen's Sergeant, and in that capacity opened the case against Mary on the occasion of her trial.

- Gervais.** Jacques Gervais was Mary's surgeon, and accompanied her to the scaffold.
- Gifford.** Gilbert Gifford (1561?–1590) was an unscrupulous scoundrel who acted as a spy in the service of Walsingham. Being a Catholic, and in orders, he gained the confidence of Mary's friends, and betrayed their plans to the government. He encouraged the Babington conspirators, and delivered Mary's letters to his master. He died in prison. "That he was capable of almost any villainy is clear." Sidney Lee.
- Gifford.** William Gifford (1554–1629) was a lecturer at the English College at Rheims, and afterwards Archbishop and Duke of Rheims, and the first peer of France. There is nothing to indicate that he was related to the spy Gilbert Gifford.
- Glasgow.** James Beaton (or Bethune), Archbishop of Glasgow (1517–1603), was Mary's representative at the French court for many years, and administered her revenues as dowager of France.
- Gorges.** Sir Thomas Gorges was a gentleman of Elizabeth's court, sent with Wade to seize Mary's papers at Chartley.
- Gorion.** Pierre Gorion was Mary's apothecary, and chosen to accompany her to the scaffold. In October, 1587, he returned to Paris, and fulfilled the injunctions laid upon him by reporting to Mendoza. It may be added that the King of Spain scrupulously complied with Mary's requests.
- Grange.** Sir William Kirkcaldy of Grange (*d.* 1573) was one of Mary's enemies in Scotland, but was later restored to her favor. After the assassination of Murray, he held the castle of Edinburgh for the Queen's party, but was forced to surrender it to the combined forces of James VI and Elizabeth, whereupon he was hanged.
- Gray.** Patrick Gray, sixth Lord Gray (*d.* 1612), known as the "Master of Gray," was commissioned by Mary to represent her interests at the court of her son James, but betrayed her secrets to him, and plotted against her.
- Grey.** See **Kent**.
- Guise.** Francis, second Duke of Guise (1519–1563), was Mary's uncle, and one of the greatest of French generals. He held Metz against Charles V, took Calais from the English, and

brought about the treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis. He was assassinated by a Huguenot nobleman, February 18, 1563.

**Guise.** Henry I, third Duke of Guise (1550-1588), was a first cousin of Mary. He was the head of the League, and one of the contrivers of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, August 24, 1572. He was assassinated December 23, 1588.

**Guise.** See **Lorraine.**

**Hardwick.** See **Shrewsbury.**

**Hastings.** See **Huntingdon.**

**Hatton.** Sir Christopher Hatton, Lord Chancellor of England (1540-1591), was a favorite of Elizabeth, and took a prominent part in the trials of Parry, Babington, and Mary.

**Howard.** Charles Howard, Lord Howard of Effingham, Earl of Nottingham (1536-1624), was a distinguished courtier and Lord High Admiral. He was appointed a commissioner for Mary's trial, but was not present. According to Davison, it was at Howard's urgent request that Elizabeth signed the death-warrant.

**Howard.** See **Arundel.**

**Howard.** See **Norfolk.**

**Hunsdon.** Henry Carey, first Lord Hunsdon (1524?-1596), was cousin to Elizabeth and chamberlain of her household, also the occupant of many responsible positions. He was one of the commissioners for the trial of Mary at Fotheringay.

**Huntingdon.** Henry Hastings, third Earl of Huntingdon (1535-1595), was for a short time joint custodian (with Shrewsbury) of Mary at Tutbury. He was a zealous Puritan, and a claimant to the throne of England.

**James.** Son of Mary and Darnley (1566-1625), became James VI of Scotland in 1567 (with Murray as regent), and James I of England after the death of Elizabeth in 1603.

**John.** Don John of Austria (1547-1578) was an illegitimate son of the Emperor Charles V, and celebrated for his victory over the Turks at Lepanto (1571). He was governor of the Netherlands from 1576 to his death. A marriage with Mary was planned for him, to take place after the conquest of England by Philip II of Spain.

**Kennedy.** Jane Kennedy was one of the attendants who accompanied Mary to the scaffold. She afterwards married Sir Andrew Melville.

**Kent.** Henry Grey, sixth Earl of Kent (*d.* 1615), was given charge of Mary's execution, in company with the Earl of Shrewsbury.

**Ker.** See Fernihurst.

**Kirkcaldy.** See Grange.

**Knowles.** Sir Francis Knollys (1514?–1596) was put in charge of Mary upon her arrival in England, and taught her the English language, trying at the same time to convert her. He acted as a commissioner at the trials of the Babington conspirators and of Mary.

**Leicester.** Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester (1532?–1588), was Elizabeth's favorite courtier, whom early in her reign she thought of marrying. About 1563, she suggested him as a possible husband for Mary. He became one of Mary's most determined enemies, and urged upon Elizabeth that she be privately murdered.

**Leslie.** See Ross.

**Lewis.** See Lodovic.

**Liggon.** Ralph Liggon was Mary's agent in Flanders, where he had lived in exile for several years.

**Lodovic.** Presumably Owen Lewis (1532–1594), a Welsh Catholic, who was Bishop of Cassano (Naples) and held other ecclesiastic offices abroad. He was a friend of Cardinal Allen from their boyhood days, and joint founder with him of the English seminaries at Douay and Rome.

**Lopez.** Roderigo Lopez was a Portuguese Jew, a physician, who settled in England in 1559, and was implicated in a plot to murder Elizabeth. He was executed in 1594. The allusion in the text is consequently an anachronism.

**Lorraine.** Charles, Cardinal of Lorraine (1525–1574), was the brother of Francis, Duke of Guise, and Mary's uncle.

**Madge.** Margaret of Valois, sister of Charles IX, and wife of Henry IV.

**Mary Stuart.** Mary Queen of Scots (1542-1587) was born in Linlithgow Palace, December 7 or 8, 1542. She was the daughter of James V of Scotland and Mary of Guise. She became an infant queen December 14, 1542, on the death of her father. On July 7, 1548, an arrangement was made for her marriage to the French dauphin, and she was at once sent to France for her education. She was married April 24, 1558. When Mary Tudor died in November of that year, Mary Stuart claimed the crown, and assumed the title of Queen of England, Scotland, and Ireland. On July 10, 1559, her husband became Francis II, King of France. He died December 5, 1560, and she returned to Scotland August 19, 1561. She married Henry Stewart, Lord Darnley, July 29, 1565. It was her intention to restore Catholicism in Scotland, and, with this in view, she gave high office to one David Rizzio, an Italian. Darnley's jealousy was aroused, and he, with a company of angry nobles, dragged Rizzio from her supper-room March 9, 1566, and murdered him. Pretending a reconciliation with Darnley, she escaped with him that night, and fled to Dunbar. She soon raised a powerful force, and entered Edinburgh. Meanwhile, the rebel lords escaped to England. Her son (James VI of Scotland and James I of England) was born June 19, 1566. Becoming hopelessly estranged from Darnley, she took James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, more and more into her favor, and plotted with him for the murder of her husband. Darnley, who was ill, was taken to a house in Kirk of Field, near Edinburgh, and was slain there by an explosion of gunpowder, February 9, 1567. Bothwell was charged with the crime, and, after a farcical trial, was acquitted April 12. He was divorced from his wife Catherine Gordon on May 3, and on May 15 became Mary's third husband. The opposing nobles made war upon him, and at Carberry Hill, June 15, Mary surrendered, on condition that Bothwell should be allowed to escape unmolested. Bothwell fled into exile, and Mary was sent to Lochleven. While there she abdicated, and signed an act nominating her half-brother Murray as regent for her infant son. She escaped from Lochleven May 2, 1568, gathered a force about her, and was finally defeated at Langside, May 13. She then crossed the Solway into England, appealing to Elizabeth for protection. Then followed her detention at

Carlisle, Bolton, Tutbury, Wingfield, Tutbury, Coventry, Chatsworth, Sheffield (1570-83), Wingfield, Tutbury, Chartley, and Fotheringay. During these years occurred the Northumberland-Westmoreland plan for a Catholic rising (1569), the Ridolfi conspiracy (1572), the plot for an invasion under the Duke of Guise (1582), and the Babington conspiracy (1586). Mary was also engaged during these years in much active conspiracy with the Catholic enemies of Elizabeth in France, Spain, and Italy. She was tried October 14-15, at Fotheringay, for complicity in the Babington plot. The trial was before a commission of English nobles, and Mary conducted her own defence. After the second day, Elizabeth adjourned the trial to the star-chamber. Here on October 25, with but one dissenting vote, Mary was found guilty by the commissioners. About three weeks later, Buckhurst and Beale brought the verdict to her. The sentence was proclaimed and welcomed throughout England, but Elizabeth did not sign the death-warrant until February 1, 1587. At the same time she sent word to Paulet, Mary's keeper, indicating her displeasure that he should not, in all this time, have found some secret way of doing away with his prisoner. On February 7, Shrewsbury and Kent came to Fotheringay to superintend the execution of the sentence, and on the following morning she was beheaded in the great hall of the castle. She met her death with courage and dignity, solemnly avowing her innocence, and praying for her church and her enemies. Elizabeth pretended that she had never meant the execution to take place, vented her displeasure upon those immediately responsible for it, and gave her victim a royal burial, August 1, in Peterborough Cathedral. The remains were afterwards transferred by James I to Westminster Abbey.

**Melville.** Sir Andrew Melville was master of the household of Mary during her latter years, and brother of Robert, first Lord Melville. He accompanied his mistress to the scaffold. He afterwards married Jane Kennedy.

**Melville.** Sir Robert Melville, first Lord Melville, was employed by Mary in diplomatic negotiations with Elizabeth. After the sentence, he was sent by James VI with the Master of Gray to entreat Elizabeth to spare Mary's life.

- Mendoza.** Don Bernardino de Mendoza was Spanish ambassador to the English court, and was charged with complicity in the Throckmorton conspiracy. In consequence of this he was expelled from the country in January, 1584.
- Mildmay.** Sir Walter Mildmay (1520?-1589) was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and founder of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. He was one of the commissioners at Mary's trial.
- Morgan.** Thomas Morgan (1543-1606?) was a Catholic conspirator devoted to the cause of Mary. He was with her in Lord Shrewsbury's castle at Tutbury, where he managed her correspondence. In 1573 he went to Paris, and became her confidential agent abroad. He was implicated in Parry's plot to assassinate Elizabeth, and his surrender was demanded from the French king. This was not granted, but he was imprisoned in the Bastille, where he continued his activities as agent and conspirator. He helped to organize the Babington conspiracy.
- Mowbray.** Barbara Mowbray was one of Mary's attendants. She married Gilbert Curle, the secretary, and their child was baptized by Mary with her own name.
- Murray.** Lord James Stewart, Earl of Moray (1531?-1570) was Mary's half-brother and regent of Scotland. He was assassinated by James Hamilton.
- Nau.** Claude de la Boisselière Nau (*f.* 1574-1605) was Mary's French secretary from 1575.
- Neville.** See **Westmoreland**.
- Norfolk.** Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk (1536-1572), was a son of the poet Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey. He was the first subject in England under Elizabeth, and sought to become the fourth husband of Mary Stuart. Conspiring for her liberation, he was executed as a traitor.
- Northumberland.** Henry Percy, ninth Earl of Northumberland (1564-1632), whose father had died (probably by suicide) in the Tower the year before the date of this mention of the son, was a Protestant, but his intimacy in Paris with Charles Paget placed him under suspicion of being an adherent of Mary's cause.



**Northumberland.** Thomas Percy, seventh Earl of Northumberland, was beheaded at York, August 22, 1572, for conspiracy against Elizabeth.

**Nottingham.** See **Howard**.

**Paget.** Charles Paget (*d.* 1612) was a younger brother of Thomas Paget. He left England about 1572, and settled in Paris, where for many years he intrigued in Mary's cause, and shared in the administration of her immense dowry in France. He was attainted in 1587.

**Paget.** Thomas, third Lord Paget (*d.* 1590), fled to Paris after the discovery of Throckmorton's conspiracy in 1583. Elizabeth demanded his surrender by the French king, but was refused. He was attainted in 1587, and died in exile.

**Parma.** See **Farnese**.

**Parry.** William Parry (*d.* 1585) was a Catholic conspirator, implicated with Morgan and Charles Paget in a plot to murder Elizabeth. Elected to Parliament in 1584, he was expelled a few months later, charged with high treason, convicted, and executed March 2, 1584-85.

**Parsons.** Robert Parsons (1546-1610) was an English Jesuit, active in intrigue against Elizabeth and the Protestants in England.

**Paulet.** Sir Amias Paulet (1536?-1588) was the keeper of Mary during her last year. He fulfilled his difficult duties in a strictly conscientious manner, and sternly refused to act upon the suggestion, sent him by Davison, that the secret murder of his prisoner would spare Elizabeth much embarrassment.

**Percy.** See **Northumberland**.

**Philip.** Philip II, King of Spain (1527-1598), was the only son of the Emperor Charles V. In 1554 he married Mary Tudor, Queen of England, and after her death attempted to obtain the hand of Elizabeth.

**Phillipps.** Thomas Phillipps was the secretary and spy of Walsingham who intercepted and deciphered Mary's correspondence. He is known to have lived until 1622, or later.

**Pierpoint.** Elizabeth Pierpoint was a daughter of Sir Henry Pierpoint, who married Frances Cavendish, one of the children of the Countess of Shrewsbury by her second husband.

**The Pope.** Gregory XIII (1572-1585), Sixtus V (1585-1590).

**Popham.** Sir John Popham (1531?-1607) was Attorney-General at the time of Mary's trial.

**Ronsard.** Pierre de Ronsard (1524-1585), "prince of poets," was the chief of the Pléiade.

**Ross.** John Leslie, Bishop of Ross (1527-1596), was intimately associated with Mary's affairs from the time of her arrival in Scotland. He was one of her most trusted counsellors, and was concerned in many intrigues on her behalf. From 1574 he represented her interests in Paris and Rome. He was a voluminous writer of historical and political controversy, and the chief literary champion of the Catholic party in Scotland.

**Sackville.** See **Buckhurst.**

**Salisbury.** Thomas Salisbury (1555?-1586) was one of the conspirators with Babington. He pleaded guilty to the charge of inciting rebellion and foreign invasion, but denied that he had plotted the assassination of Elizabeth. He was executed September 21, the day after Babington and his six associates; this accounts for the fact that he does not appear in Act II, Scene 3, of the tragedy.

**Savage.** John Savage (*d.* 1586) was a Catholic soldier. He met Ballard in London in 1586, and volunteered to join the Babington conspiracy. When brought to trial, he confessed to the whole indictment.

**Shrewsbury.** Elizabeth Talbot, Countess of Shrewsbury (1518-1608), known as "Bess of Hardwick," took the sixth Earl of Shrewsbury for her fourth husband in 1568. She was famous as a builder and as a woman of affairs.

**Shrewsbury.** George Talbot, sixth Earl of Shrewsbury (1528?-1590), was in charge of Mary from 1569 to 1584. He presided at her execution.

**Stuart.** See **Murray.**

**Talbot.** Mary Cavendish was a daughter of the Countess of Shrewsbury, and wife of Gilbert Talbot, son of the Earl of Shrewsbury by a former marriage.

**Talbot.** See Shrewsbury.

**Throgmorton.** Thomas Throckmorton (*d.* 1595), a brother of the conspirator Francis Throckmorton (executed 1584), settled in Paris as one of Mary's agents in 1582.

**Tichborne.** Chidiock Tichborne (1558?–1586) was one of the conspirators with Babington. The letter which he wrote to his wife on the eve of his execution is preserved, as well as a poem of three stanzas which he is said to have written in the Tower.

**Tilney.** Charles Tilney (1561–1586) was one of the conspirators with Babington. He has been mentioned as possibly the author of *The Tragedy of Locrine*, on the strength of a manuscript note to that effect by George Buc, found by Collier in a copy of the 1595 edition of the play.

**Wade.** Sir William Wade (or Waad) (1546–1623) was a diplomatist who was sent to Mary to propose terms with Elizabeth, who went to Paris to secure Morgan's extradition, and who seized Mary's papers at Chartley.

**Walsingham.** Sir Francis Walsingham (1536?–1590) was Secretary of State under Elizabeth, and employed upon various foreign missions. He was one of the commissioners on the trial of Mary, and was accused by her partisans of having forged the letters to Babington offered as evidence of her guilt.

**Westmoreland.** Charles Neville, sixth Earl of Westmoreland (1543–1601), joined the Earl of Northumberland in rebellion against Elizabeth (1569), and escaped into the Spanish Netherlands, where he lived in exile the rest of his life.

**Wyatt.** Sir Thomas Wyatt the younger (1521?–1554) was a son of the poet, and leader of an insurrection against Mary Tudor in 1554. For this enterprise, undertaken in opposition to her marriage with Philip II, he was executed for high treason.



## Chronological List of Writings

1860. The Queen Mother, and Rosamond.  
1865. Atalanta in Calydon.  
1865. Chastelard : A Tragedy.  
1866. Poems and Ballads.  
1866. Note on Poems and Reviews.  
1867. A Song of Italy.  
1868. Siena.  
1868. William Blake : A Critical Essay.  
1870. Ode on the Proclamation of the French Republic ; September 4th, 1870.  
1871. Songs before Sunrise.  
1872. Under the Microscope.  
1874. Bothwell : A Tragedy.  
1875. George Chapman.  
1875. Essays and Studies.  
1875. Songs of Two Nations (A Song of Italy, Ode on the Proclamation of the French Republic, and Diræ).  
1876. Erechtheus : A Tragedy.  
1876. Note of an English Republican on the Muscovite Crusade.  
1877. A Note on Charlotte Brontë.  
1878. Poems and Ballads. Second Series.  
1880. A Study of Shakespeare.  
1880. Songs of the Springtides.  
1880. Studies in Song.  
1880. Specimens of Modern Poets. The Heptalogia ; or, the Seven against Sense. A Cap with Seven Bells.  
1881. Mary Stuart : A Tragedy.  
1882. Tristram of Lyonesse, and Other Poems.  
1883. A Century of Roundels.  
1884. A Midsummer Holiday, and Other Poems.  
1885. Marino Faliero : A Tragedy.

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- 1886. A Study of Victor Hugo.
- 1886. Miscellanies.
- 1887. A Word for the Navy.
- 1887. Locrine : A Tragedy.
- 1889. A Study of Ben Jonson.
- 1889. Poems and Ballads. Third Series.
- 1892. The Sisters : A Tragedy.
- 1894. Astrophel, and Other Poems.
- 1894. Studies in Prose and Poetry.
- 1896. The Tale of Balen.
- 1899. Rosamund, Queen of the Lombards.
- 1904. A Channel Passage, and Other Poems.
- 1905. Love's Cross Currents.

This list includes all of Swinburne's works that have appeared as individual publications with title-pages of their own. To them should be added *Dead Love* (in *Once-a-Week*, 1862), and *A Year's Letters*, by Mrs. Horace Manners (in *The Tatler*, 1877).

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